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# SPEECH

OF

## JOHN BELL, OF TENNESSEE,

ON

### THE MEXICAN WAR.



DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, FEBRUARY 2 AND 3, 1848.

MR. PRESIDENT : I believe it is in bad taste to offer any apology for addressing the Senate on the ground of feeble health, or of inadequate preparation, or for any other cause. Every gentleman is at liberty to speak or be silent, as he may determine for himself. I will, therefore, make none for the remarks I propose to submit, although they may not be characterized by much novelty. But this is a question of such unusual importance that I think some allowance may be made for gentlemen, although they may fail to offer any thing fresh or interesting after a discussion so long continued, and with such ability, on both sides of the chamber. Indeed, upon a subject presenting so wide a field for debate, and so rich and varied in its topics as the present, it must be the fault of the speaker if he can offer nothing somewhat new.

This is a question, sir, on which I could not feel justified in maintaining silence. I cannot say, with another Senator, that had this measure been permitted to pass without debate, or a division by yeas and nays, I would have been content without expressing my views upon it. I feel bound to pursue a different course for several reasons. This is a question upon which the public mind is peculiarly sensitive. The first impulse of the patriotic and reflecting part of the community, in every section of the country, is in favor of all supplies which may be demanded by the department entrusted with the direction of the military operations of the Government, when a war is flagrant. This measure bears the impress of Executive recommendation, and those who oppose it will be strictly reckoned with. The people will require sufficient reasons. By the theory of our system, our voice is not so much our own as that of the constituency we represent. I came to Washington expecting to give my support to every such measure as the present, that might be brought before the Senate ; and, in doing so, I would be responding to the general sentiment of the State which I in part represent, as that sentiment existed a few months ago. I am proud to have it in my power to say of the people of that State, that they will permit no considerations of party interest or prejudice to embarrass the Government in the prosecution of an existing war, whatever objections they may have to its origin, or the motives and objects with which it is waged, unless those objects shall appear mischievous and ruinous to the country ; and I do not doubt that every other Senator may boast a constituency equally patriotic. Those objects, as heretofore understood, though not approved by a large portion of them, yet, as there seemed to be no other mode of terminating the war consistently with the avowed policy of the Administration than by a vigorous prosecution of it, they were favorable to that course. But, sir, since the further development of the views of the Executive in the late message and other official documents, some of them clearly

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enough and others darkly stated and shadowed forth, I must suppose that a corresponding change in public opinion and sentiment upon this subject will follow.

Again, sir, I consider that to vote for this measure is to approve, to the fullest extent, the policy of the Administration in the further prosecution of this war. To sit in silence and to suffer it to pass without remonstrance would be an acquiescence in that policy, not in the power of those who are now silent, when hereafter the evil is upon the country, to retract or deny. They cannot say that they were not sufficiently forewarned by the Administration of what would or might be the final and momentous result of this policy.

I believe, with one or two exceptions, the entire Senate has heretofore promptly voted every supply, both of men and money, demanded by the Executive for the prosecution of this war. The Senator from Illinois, (Mr. DOUGLASS) in his speech on yesterday, insisted that the Whigs of the Senate had suddenly changed their tactics, and are now in opposition to their former liberal course. It is my purpose, sir, to show that the Administration has changed its policy—that it is no longer what it was twelve months ago.

But, Mr. President, I must be indulged in a few other preliminary remarks before I proceed to the main purpose of my argument.

I shall not stop to discuss several of the questions which distinguished Senators seemed to think of importance, and upon which they have employed much close and cogent argument. I shall not stop to inquire whether the President, by his order to General Taylor of the 13th of January, 1846, intended to bring on a war; I shall not inquire whether Mexico or the United States committed the first act of military aggression upon disputed territory, nor shall I delay to inquire whether the war was constitutionally brought on. It is enough for me that it exists; that that it has received the sanction of the legislative department of the Government, whatever I may think of the notable device by which that sanction was extorted. I shall not inquire whether the war might not have been avoided, though I think it might and should. I shall not inquire whether the President was, from the first, actuated by a settled purpose of acquiring territory by conquest; nor shall I examine the circumstances connected with the origin of the war to prove that it is unjust and iniquitous. If it were so, for myself I would rather seek to cast a veil over the record, or blot it out forever. But in saying this I mean no censure upon the course of honorable Senators, or others who take a different view of the question. They doubtless have a deep and abiding conviction of the injustice of this war, and their exalted sense of duty to themselves and their country impels them to proclaim this their honest conviction. But I shall neither seek to fasten this conviction upon my own mind, nor upon that of others. For myself I choose to indulge the pleasing reflection, the illusion, if it be one, that up to this period at least no such untoward development of the tendencies of our system has occurred, as that the constituted authorities selected by the free and enlightened suffrages of the people have, in the mere wantonness of power and the unbridled lust of domination, perpetrated so great an outrage upon a neighboring nation, and upon the rights of humanity.

Sir, I take this occasion to say that I have little sympathy for the Mexican republic or the Mexican rulers, now or at any recent period. So far as they could, by their example, they have brought opprobrium and disgrace upon the cause of free institutions, and upon the very name of republic. I have none at all for those faithless, gasconading chiefs, who have so long oppressed the masses of their countrymen with their exactions and all the evils of fiction and anarchy. I can sympathize with the honest and enlightened patriots, as there are doubtless some such in Mexico, who are struggling to maintain the honor of their country, the integrity of their soil, and the existence of their nationality. I can sympathize, too, with the mass of unoffending inhabitants, the non-combatants, who are the victims of war. But, I repeat, I have no sympathy for their vain-glorious, fictitious chiefs, nor for any government of their founding.



I shall further avail myself of this occasion to state, that I do not hold Mexico to be altogether blameless of this war, and of all its bloody consequences ; neither in its origin, nor in the conduct of it, on their part. In the revolution in Texas ; in the circumstances of connivance, if not of encouragement, on the part of the Government of the United States attending that event ; in the final annexation of Texas without first negotiating the consent of Mexico, she might well feel her national pride wounded—she might well, as the weaker power, conceive that she had not been dealt with in that spirit of conciliation and courtesy which the professions of amity on our part made proper. In truth, the annexation of Texas, under all the circumstances preceding and attending it, was not a very neighborly act on our part ; nor do I think, without pretending to be well informed on the subject, that the character of this country was duly consulted and respected in the manner in which that act was consummated. Then Mexico had some cause of complaint against this Government. But, on the other hand, we had causes of complaint against Mexico. I need not enumerate them. I do not say there was sufficient cause of war, for that might imply that it was expedient to declare war before the collision of arms on the Rio Grande ; but if the grounds of those complaints had not been removed, if Mexico had persevered in her hostile policy towards the United States, after all the usual means of conciliation and amicable adjustment, such as we have employed towards other and more powerful nations under similar circumstances, had been exhausted on our part, I cannot say that we would not have been justified in declaring war by any code of public morals or of international law recognised among civilized nations. Hence, I am not of opinion that there is any thing in the mode of bringing on this war, nor in its past conduct on our part, nor in the conduct of Mexico, which should restrain us as a just and magnanimous people, if we think it expedient to our interest, (I speak not of honor, for that has already been amply vindicated—Mexico has fully atoned, both in blood and the other calamities of war, for any violation of our honor)—I say, if we think it expedient to any of our great interests, commercial or military, I can see nothing to restrain us from claiming the rights of the conqueror to any moderate extent which those interests require ; and which would be neither unreasonable nor oppressive in us to demand, nor dishonorable or ruinous to Mexico to concede as the vanquished party.

But, sir, it is a far different question how far I would go ; how much more blood, how much more treasure, I would sacrifice in a war waged under present circumstances : under the recent development of the policy of the Administration, in the further prosecution of this war. The question as now presented involves not so much the consideration of what we may honorably and rightfully do in reference to Mexico as the vanquished party in a war of which she cannot claim to be blameless, as of other questions and consequences deeply and vitally affecting the Union, and the policy and principles of our own Government.

I beg, Mr. President, to be indulged in a few other preliminary remarks which now occur to me as appropriate to the subject. When I said that I would not discuss certain questions in regard to the propriety of this war, its justice or injustice, I beg leave to explain that I would feel that I had a perfect right to do otherwise if I thought the interests of the country demanded such a course. I have had, sir, a pretty large experience in public life, but have not as yet disciplined myself into perfect indifference or callousness as to what may be said, whether in this body or out of it, in regard to the motives which control my own course, or that of those with whom I am associated. The remarks which I am about to offer are prompted by the continued denunciations which I meet with in some of the public journals of the day. I hold, sir, for one, that gentlemen who believe this war to be unjust and iniquitous, or, whether just or unjust, that the further prosecution of it is likely to inflict upon the country greater evils than can be compensated by all the territorial acquisitions which the courage and resources of the country may achieve, have a perfect right to arraign the authors of it at the bar of

public opinion, and to thwart them by all the means of speech, writing, and voting which the constitution warrants. I hold, sir, that to deny to them the exercise of this privilege by law would be an act of despotism under legal forms; and to seek to forestall the exercise of this privilege by intimidation and the influence of official denunciation, by charging those who avail themselves of this privilege as the allies of the public enemy and their auxiliaries in the war, is an attempt at moral despotism, only to be excused as an emanation of excessive and over-heated zeal, in which neither the judgment nor a proper regard for the institutions of freedom have had much to do.

Why, sir, after Mexico shall have fallen under our conquering arms in the south, and the British possessions in the north, let us suppose that the spirit of progressive democracy, which is becoming so rife in the land, emboldened by past success, should succeed in converting this people into a nation of propagandists, and with the aid of such fanatic givings-out as that it is destiny—that it is our mission—should actually involve us in a war with all Europe—if a large portion of the reflecting and intelligent citizens of this country should be of opinion that such a contest could have no other end than to destroy our foreign commerce, exhaust our resources, cover the ocean with pirates, afflict the world with the calamities of war, and retard instead of advancing civilization and the cause of civil liberty, would they not be recreant to their duty and traitors to their country, were they to seal their lips and view in silence the progress of such wild and extravagant schemes? Yet, sir, I dare avow that even in such a war we should find the organs of the dominant party—the recipients of Executive patronage all over the country—heralding the same charge of treason and alliance with the public enemy against those patriots who might have the courage to bare themselves to the storm.

Well, sir, if in the present war there are those who honestly believe that the real objects of it—that even those territorial acquisitions which are openly avowed as the objects of it in part—would prove an apple of discord at home, a source of dangerous domestic dissension—would be a curse rather than a blessing to the country—are their lips to be sealed for fear their voices may penetrate the council chamber of the Government of Mexico, and disincline it to a treaty? Such a result, evil as it may be, is only one of the inconveniences incident to that system of freedom which is our only guaranty for the preservation of all our liberties, and the boasted superiority of our own over all other forms of government. But, sir, should the tone of remonstrance against this war raise so high in this chamber as to penetrate every vale in Mexico, reverberate among her mountains, and rouse the whole population to a spirit of resistance to the attempt to subdue them to our dominion, there are those who believe that a greater calamity may befall this country, in the further prosecution of this war, than even such a result as that.

But, it is said, the war still goes on; our armies are in the field; the blood of our countrymen still flows in repeated conflicts with an obstinate and infatuated people; our detachments are cut off, and our straggling soldiers are daily pieced by the lances of the murderous guerrilleros; and will you not forbear for their sakes? Who forbear? Who should forbear? The opponents of this war? Those who believe, not that the success of our arms, but of the policy in support of which they are employed abroad, would bring defeat and disaster upon our institutions at home? And who are they who oppose this war and the policy of the President in the further prosecution of it? Are they of any one section of the Union? Do they belong exclusively to the North or to the South? Have they shunned the perils and privations of the war when called by the constituted authorities of the country to the support of her eagles? They are those who have borne their full share of the burdens of the war; they are those who have given their full proportion, both of substance and of blood, to maintain the supremacy of our arms. And what are their numbers? I verily believe that two-thirds of the people of this country are in heart opposed to the policy of this war, whatever may be their opinions six months hence; and but for the tyranny of party, the force of party obligation, and



the power of Executive influence, could they be allowed to speak—satiated with the glory already acquired, the honor of the country already amply vindicated—they would strangle this Hydra to-day. Would theirs be the voice of faction?

Who, then, I repeat, should forbear in order to spare the further effusion of blood in Mexico? The powerful array of those opposed to the war, who believe that the further prosecution of it, for the objects avowed, would be mischievous and disastrous to their own country? Or shall not the President and the advisers and the champions of his policy be called on to yield up their pride of consistency, to sacrifice their visions of national, and may be personal glory, in the projected enlargement of the boundaries of the republic, upon the altar of public harmony and of the Union? Sir, the voice of a large portion of their countrymen is opposed to their policy; they have a right to cause it to be heard through all the channels of public intelligence. It has long since penetrated the interior of the White House, and if the President and his counsellors shall disregard its warnings; if, having the power in their own hands, wielding at their will an army of more than forty thousand of the choicest troops in the world, they shall continue to prosecute this war; if our gallant fellows are still destined to fall by the hand of a defeated but still resisting foe; should the war be increased in fury and destructiveness until the plains and mountain passes of all Anahuac run blood, and still there shall be no treaty—no peace—upon whom will rest the fearful responsibility? When the day of accounting shall come—and it will come—from whom will the country demand a reckoning? From those who, reckless of human suffering and in despite of the warning voice of their own countrymen, persevere in the execution of an inexorable and fatal policy.

Mr. President I have occupied more time in these remarks than I intended, and much more than their importance may be supposed to justify: I trust, however, they are not altogether inappropriate.

I have already stated that to pass this bill would be to approve the policy of the Administration in the further prosecution of the war. What is that policy? I desire to speak with all due courtesy and deference to the President of the United States and his friends and supporters on this floor; but I would earnestly inquire what is the real policy of the Administration in the further prosecution of the war? And with like deference to the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, I must be allowed to say that I have a right, not as an individual, but as a member of this body, to a somewhat more explicit expression of what he holds to be that policy than he has hitherto chosen to give us; and I inquire now what is the policy of the Administration in the further prosecution of this war? I know that one gentleman will very readily answer, it is for the purpose of “conquering an honorable peace;” and another will reply that it is for the purpose of securing “indemnity for the past and security for the future.” But these are Delphic responses, mere vague generalities, noncommittals, and may be construed to mean any thing that may be done in future, provided only that some measure of indemnity is obtained.

The President is more explicit in his message. He informs us that New Mexico and California are already in our possession, and must not be given up. This is all very fair and candid, so far as it goes. But what further acquisition of territory is to be demanded of Mexico? If none, and if those provinces now in our possession would be regarded as a satisfactory indemnity, why not, in view of the uncertainty and embarrassments which lie in the way of an early termination of the war, fall back upon those provinces and hold them, and thus limit the waste of life, and spare the country the enormous expenditure which attend our present military operations in Mexico? The reply will be, Oh, we have no treaty, the war will still be open, we shall have no peace! Well, I will take gentlemen upon their own ground. Suppose that you have or may have a treaty with the Government now assembled at Queretaro, ceding California and New Mexico, would that be satisfactory to the Administration? I would be glad to hear from some honorable Senator whether such a treaty with the existing Government of Mexico

would be satisfactory, or do you want still more territory? I should be glad to hear from my friend, the Senator from Mississippi, (Mr. Foote,) on this subject. What more does he want than those provinces? I know that he is too candid and too courageous to withhold the expression of his sentiments.

Mr. Foote. I have no hesitation in answering the question proposed; but, in doing so, desire to be understood as having no authority to commit any person but myself. If a treaty can be obtained with some Government in Mexico, entitled to respect as such, which should give us the Californias and New Mexico, with a reasonable prospect of such treaty being observed on the part of Mexico, for one I should be content on the point of indemnity.

Mr. Bell. I am gratified with the bold, unhesitating reply of the Senator. It is such as I expected from him. He would be satisfied with a treaty made with the existing Government, on condition that it would bring with it present and permanent peace.

Mr. Foote. The Senator misconceives my meaning. It is a question of some delicacy, and one upon which I wish to be understood. It is true, as the honorable Senator says, that for the purpose of securing peace—though I do not dread the result, in case they refuse to make peace—if the Government of Mexico, at any time hereafter, or at present, turns out to be such a Government as we can rely upon, and such territory as I have spoken of be granted to us, and there be circumstances which would authorize the reasonable expectation that the peace will not be violated, I would be perfectly content.

Mr. Bell. I believe I understand the answer of the honorable Senator. I understood him as speaking the sentiments of the Administration.

Mr. Foote. I speak for myself.

Mr. Bell. I now understand, I trust, something of the views of the Administration. A treaty with the existing Government of Mexico, embracing a cession of such territory as he desires, would be satisfactory to the Senator from Mississippi, upon the condition that it should bring with it assurances of a permanent peace. But I desire further information. What assurance, what guaranty of peace do you demand? Do you desire a further indemnity in money? The honorable Senator near me (Mr. Cass) will say no, he scorns it. Then, what further do you want than New Mexico and California, by way of security for the future? What says the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs to this question?

Mr. Cass (in his seat) said that he might choose to answer when the Senator's argument was more fully developed.

Mr. Bell. I wish to press home the inquiry, and I say to Senators, and particularly to the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, will you be satisfied with the cession of New Mexico and California as an indemnity? You would; you want no more territory—no money. What more, then, do you want? If you say you would be satisfied without any thing more, then I put the question to the honorable Senator, (Mr. Cass,) when you demand indemnity for the past and security for the future, what is it you mean by "security for the future?" When a question was asked, in the progress of this discussion, of some honorable Senator on the other side of the chamber, as to the object of the Administration in the further prosecution of the war, the answer was, indemnity. The chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, (Mr. Cass,) sitting in his place, added, "and security for the future?" Moreover, what does the message mean in declaring that the war must be prosecuted until we obtain indemnity for the past and security for the future? Will the Senator answer that the phrase "security for the future" has no distinct or substantive meaning; that it is merely an expletive, the effect of careless composition? I am sure that the able and distinguished Senator will not say so. What, then, does the honorable Senator say to the question, what is meant by "security for the future?" I will, for the present, answer for him, after I shall have stated what I understand to be the real policy of the Administra-



tion in the further prosecution of the war. From the date of the failure of Mr. Trist's negotiation, and the splendid success of Gen. Scott, the President and his advisers no longer limited their views to a treaty which should merely cede the territories of New Mexico and California, but one which should bring with it ample security for the future—security for a permanent peace. That I understood to be the policy of the Administration. I understand that no treaty with the existing Government of Mexico will be satisfactory, either to the Administration or its supporters on this floor, unless it can furnish security for the future—security for a permanent peace between the two countries.

Mr. FOOTE. Do I understand the honorable Senator as referring to me? I have already said that I would be satisfied with a treaty giving us so much territory as is comprised within the limits of New Mexico and California, if adequate security, as to the observance of the treaty on the part of Mexico, should also be obtained. I have always doubted, and still doubt, whether the adequate security could be obtained without establishing the Sierra Madre as a line of military defence, and retaining the Castle of San Juan de Ulua and other strong places in temporary occupancy.

Mr. BELL. I think I understand the views of the honorable Senator. I do not desire to misinterpret the views of the honorable Senator, or of the Administration. I take the position that the phrase "security for the future" has a substantive meaning. I suppose that the Administration can make no treaty with the existing Government of Mexico which will not be liable to be disregarded and repudiated the moment our armies are withdrawn, unless the contemplated securities be required in addition to the indemnity. Then I press the inquiry, What are the nature and extent of the "security for the future" which will be demanded of Mexico? What security of any kind can the existing Government, or the faction now in power, give that would be satisfactory? Is it a mere stipulation in the treaty for future peace and friendly commercial relations? I take it for granted that is not the nature of the security intended, as all treaties include a peace and amity clause. Is it intended to stipulate for the retention of the castle of San Juan de Ulua for a term of years or indefinitely? I cannot suppose that any such treaty is expected. Is it in contemplation to have the guaranty of any foreign Power? You are precluded from any such resort by having proclaimed that you will suffer no transatlantic Powers to obtain any additional dominion in America; and you will not give them any pretext for doing so.

Having, then, no confidence in any treaty the existing Government of Mexico can make, as a "security for the future," what is the clear and inevitable conclusion upon this view of the matter? Why that you neither expect nor desire a treaty with any existing Government in Mexico; that the Government on which you rely to make such a treaty as shall afford the security you demand, is a Government to be formed and nurtured into maturity and stability under your tuition and protection. This may be regarded as a very bold assertion; but I re-assert that this Administration neither expects nor desires a treaty with any existing Government in Mexico, and that the Government with which they propose to treat is yet to be brought into existence.

No, sir, the Administration can make no treaty with the present shadow of a Government in Mexico, ceding New Mexico and California, consistently with the determination avowed in the message of "requiring security for the future." The learned and eloquent Senator from New York, (Mr. Dix,) in a speech to which I listened with the greatest pleasure—a speech, by the by, replete with the noblest sentiments and the soundest views and maxims, in every part of which I concur, except the conclusions to which he came in relation to this war—has given the Senate some further insight into the probable extent of that security for the future which the Administration proposes to demand of Mexico. It is not only to guard against hostilities between the two Powers on any boundary which may hereafter be established by treaty, but to ensure Mexico herself from the intrusion and in-



interference of any foreign Government ; to provide against any transatlantic sway over Mexico, to which the present and ever recurring factions expose her, or rather invite.

This I take to be the solution of the enigma ; of the mystic phrase, " security for the future," so often repeated, and yet never explained by the advocates of the measure under discussion. The policy of the Administration is to secure such a treaty from such a government in Mexico as will afford satisfactory guaranties for a permanent peace on our own borders, and prevent any foreign Power from obtaining a foothold in Mexico ; and this war is to be prolonged until a new Government is formed, under the protection of our arms, such as can give the security required. I challenge honorable Senators to say whether this is not the policy of the Administration, and I do not exclude the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs.

Sir, that this was the policy of the Administration when the message was delivered, and when the bill was introduced, I think, is clear.

There may be change in the policy of the Executive in the further prosecution of this war. The cloud which has for some time past been gathering over the Treasury, and which every day assumes a more threatening aspect, may have given birth to a modified policy. Of this I can know nothing ; but one thing I do know ; if a treaty is made with any existing government in Mexico embracing a cession of territory only, the responsibility of advising it will be thrown upon the Senate. It will not be advised by the President. But in saying this I mean no disparagement to the President ; I mean not to impute any want of firmness or a disposition to shrink from his just responsibility. Sir, I have no rankling feeling here (pointing to his heart) that I seek to gratify. In my toilsome ascent up the hill of life, I have long since learned the folly, if not the wickedness, of indulging such feelings, the offspring of past and fierce political conflicts. My experience has taught me that the most grievous injuries a public man is liable to receive are inflicted not by political opponents. The arrows that go deepest here (Mr. B. with the hand upon his heart) are sped by friendly hands ; by companions and collaborators in a common cause, and often by those we have most cherished, most served. No, sir, when I say that the President will throw upon the Senate the responsibility of advising such a treaty as I have described, I mean that he cannot do otherwise consistently with the policy avowed in the message. And if such a treaty shall be laid before the Senate, and it is reasonable in other respects, I would unite with his friends in extricating him from the embarrassment in which he is placed, believing that in so doing I would at the same time be extricating my country from the evils which impend over it. This I could cheerfully do, leaving the President in the full enjoyment of all his honors, and his reputation unimpaired.

But, Mr. President, if I have not mistaken the policy of the Administration in the further prosecution of the war, I feel warranted in maintaining that the large and enlightened class of patriotic citizens every where, who, though opposed to the policy of this war from its commencement, have yet felt it their duty heretofore to sustain the Executive in the prosecution of it, have been giving their support to a masked policy. The whole country has been deluded with the expectation and belief that it was the policy of the Executive to coerce a treaty with any existing government or phantom of a government that may exist in Mexico speedily, and that a cession of some moderate portion of territory and the settlement of unadjusted boundaries were the only terms that would be exacted from Mexico. The country has been led to suppose that whatever measure of supply might be demanded would have reference only to an early termination of the war, when in fact, consistently with the policy of the Administration as now understood, the war is to be prolonged, with all the attendant consequences of a waste of life and treasure, indefinitely, and until a government shall be built up in Mexico, and attain maturity under the protection of our arms, which can give the securities I have pointed out.

After all, sir, these may be said to be my own individual conclusions. It may be said that the policy of the Executive is still to obtain an immediate treaty with any Government in Mexico, stable or unstable, which may be willing to treat; and that the importance I have given to the words "security for the future" is gratuitous and unfounded. Well, sir, under this view of the question, I beg leave to repeat an inquiry I had before made. If New Mexico and California would be regarded as a sufficient indemnity, and nothing else is sought, why not fall back upon those territories and hold them by force? You say there will be no peace. Well, sir, when can you promise the country a peace, as the result of your present plan? But you insist that, after such sacrifices of blood and treasure; after having conquered in so many battles; after having captured so many cities and strongholds of the enemy, it would be inglorious and preposterous to abandon them without a treaty. Here, sir, we are met by that fatal argument of the "force of circumstances"—the same which impelled us into the war, and across the Rio Grande. It is the same that twelve months ago, after the battle of Monterey, and when you had already conquered more than a third of the whole of the Mexican territory, caused you to decline the policy of a defensive line recommended by Gen. Taylor, and urged by the distinguished Senator from South Carolina, who, from the beginning of this war, had the sagacity to perceive the dangers which threatened the country. The argument then was, we have gone too far to retreat; we have been too successful to abandon further operations without a treaty; we must teach the enemy a lesson; we must penetrate the interior of the country; we must carry our arms into the heart of Mexico. Well, sir, you have carried the war into the very heart of the enemy's country, and are now revelling on its vitals; and still you have no treaty, no peace. The argument founded on the force of circumstance has acquired increased weight and importance. You must now extend your operations; you call for ten thousand additional regular troops to enable you to overrun the whole country; to cause the calamities of war to be felt throughout all her borders; and you are led by the force of circumstances to pursue this "*ignis fatuus*" of peace and a treaty, which still eludes you and lures you onward into the meshes of a policy from which you can never extricate yourselves.

But you say you will extricate yourselves; that you will overrun the whole country, take all the strongholds and populous States, levy contributions, and in this way coerce a treaty; and if this experiment should fail, you announce your determination to take the full measure of indemnity into your own hands.

How long, sir, is the war to be continued in making this experiment—one, or two, or five years? The policy itself indicates that time will be an important element in carrying it out. You cannot recruit these ten new regiments and get them into the field in less than six or eight months. In less than one year, then, you can expect no result. And what will be the cost of this experiment? To maintain an army of fifty thousand men in Mexico, without having any certain data upon which to form an estimate, I hazard nothing in saying it cannot cost less than \$10,000,000 per annum. Then if you should succeed in levying as much as \$10,000,000 on the people of Mexico, this country will still have to supply \$30,000,000. This experiment, then, should it last one year, will cost this country at least \$30,000,000 for the support of the army alone, and still there may be no treaty; and you may be compelled at last to take the indemnity into your own hands, that indemnity being New Mexico and California; for it is under this version of the policy of the Administration that I am discussing the question. Well, sir, did it never strike honorable Senators who support the Executive in making this experiment that, if it should be crowned with complete success, and a treaty should be made ceding New Mexico and California to the United States, the whole cost to the country will be more than five times the value of the territory ceded? Sir, I cannot suppose that gentlemen so intelligent and as well-informed upon the subject can have failed to perceive this consequence, and how preposterous it would be to pursue such a course of policy, and for such a result.



I now proceed, in my desultory manner, to notice the arguments of honorable Senators in support of this bill, and the proceedings of the General in command in Mexico, in further confirmation of the views I have already advanced. The present policy of the Administration and its friends is exceedingly difficult and embarrassing, both to themselves and the country, and they must feel it to be so. While they must necessarily continue to keep the expectation of an early peace prominent before the country, their plan of operations on the other hand has a directly contrary tendency. While they do not mean to abandon altogether the idea of making a treaty with any government that may spring up in Mexico—for that is a resource which may become very convenient—yet their measures are adopted, and their operations conducted with reference to the more settled policy of encouraging the establishment of a government—a government under the protection of our arms—or of holding and governing the country, until by the experience of the “justice of our sway,” as indicated by the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs at the close of his argument, the people of Mexico shall be disposed to make such a treaty as the honor of the country demands.

The difficulty and embarrassment of the argument in support of the measure before the Senate, under such circumstances, are manifest, and it struck me as an incident deserving notice, that the distinguished Senator who introduced the bill should avail himself of the earliest occasion to say, that he knew no more of the policy of the Administration, in the prosecution of the war, than what appears in the official documents. Yet, I regarded it as such an avowal as a gentleman of his distinction and eminence in the country might feel himself called upon to make. His position in the body is one both delicate and important; and, whatever his individual opinion may be upon some particulars of the policy adopted by the Executive department of the Government, he may feel constrained to sanction them. I can make many allowances for a gentleman occupying the delicate and important relation to the Executive which he now does, as chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs.

That distinguished Senator, in his speech on this subject, confined himself mainly to the views presented in the report of the Secretary of War; and throughout his argument the expectation of an early treaty was never lost sight of, while the reasoning employed will be seen to be based upon the idea of continued occupation of the country.

The argument first advanced in support of the measure was, that our army in Mexico was in danger. (Mr. Cass shook his head.) I find that I am mistaken. The argument then was, that contingencies may arise endangering the army. The people of Mexico who have failed to make an obstinate resistance at the commencement of the war, may be roused by a protracted invasion to a high degree of energy and courage. He announced to us that our army is in the midst of eight or ten millions of a hostile population. This is an argument which appears to me to be addressed to our fears, and the popular feeling which may be supposed to exist in such an emergency. I cannot say that it is one addressed to the reason and judgment of the Senate. I need not say that if any just grounds can be shown to exist for supposing that our army is in danger, that there is not a Senator present who would not promptly vote, not ten only, but twenty, fifty, or any number of regiments that might be demanded to ensure its safety. But what are the facts, as to the perilous condition of our army? We have now not less than forty-five thousand troops in all Mexico, and new recruits are still going forward. There are not less than thirty-two thousand men under General Scott: and this is the army said to be in danger. I desire to make a brief reference to what our troops have done, that we may infer what they will or can do. To say nothing of the preceding brilliant and unsurpassed achievements of General Taylor, we have seen him at Buena Vista, with an army of less than five thousand men—of whom not more than six hundred were regulars, and the remainder undisciplined volunteers, who, as it has been properly said, had never before heard the report of a hostile gun—



repulse, with great slaughter, an army of twenty thousand—an army the best disciplined and best appointed that Mexico had been able to bring into the field since the beginning of the war, and withal supported by a heavy train of artillery. This he did in an open field. If the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DOUGLASS) were present, I would say that it was a very obstinate proceeding on the part of General Taylor not to be willing to be sacrificed; to be driven across the Rio Grande, and thence home in disgrace. We next see General Scott, with less than twelve thousand men, landing at Vera Cruz in the face of the enemy, attacking and compelling the surrender of the city, together with the Castle of San Juan de Ulua. In a very short time after, we see him with eight thousand troops storming the batteries of the enemy, and carrying the heights of Cerro Gordo, defended by an army twelve thousand strong. The fortification of Perote and the city of Puebla, with a population of eighty thousand inhabitants, panic stricken, fall before him without resistance. After refreshing his troops and receiving some reinforcements, we next see General Scott precipitating himself, with an army of not more than ten thousand men, upon the valley and city of Mexico, defended by thirty thousand armed men, assaulting and carrying the enemy's works at every point; and after a series of sanguinary conflicts, running through several days, with his army reduced to six thousand, capturing by main force the city itself, and triumphantly planting the banner of his country upon the so-called palace of the Montezumas. At no time during the course of these operations had General Scott more than fifteen thousand troops on his whole line, extending from Tampico to the city of Mexico. Upon this same line he has now an army of thirty-two thousand, well provided in every respect. It is under such circumstances that our army is said to be in danger. Sir, I cannot suppose that the argument upon this point is entitled to any weight whatever.

The next argument submitted in support of this measure is, that, after providing for the safety of the army, and the continued occupation of our present conquest, it is intended to extend the military operations to such other strongholds and rich and populous districts as it may be thought expedient to occupy. Very well; upon this point I regret that the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, who is so able, did not favor us with any estimates of the amount of force that, in his judgment, would be necessary to hold the large towns and States or districts already in our possession. I am surprised that we are furnished with no such estimates from any member of that committee, although there are several distinguished Senators on that committee who have been connected with military service. I pretend to no competency to make such an estimate. We are left pretty much to grope our way in the dark upon this point. Still some *data* we may glean from the reports of the officers of the army connected with the late splendid successes. We learn, for example, that Col. Childs held Puebla, which, by some estimates, contains a population of eighty thousand, with a force of no more than five hundred effective men, for thirty days and nights, and during a part of that time against the assaults of eight thousand troops, commanded by Santa Anna himself. Upon the line extending from Tampico to Mexico, I therefore estimate that five hundred troops will be quite a sufficient protection for Tampico; one thousand for Vera Cruz, with the addition of the marine stationed off that city; for Jalapa five hundred; as many more for Perote; the same number for Puebla, and two thousand for the city of Mexico; in all five thousand men. In this estimate I take into view that wherever our army makes its entry it disperses the army of the enemy, captures their artillery and other munitions of war, and disarms the population, leaving them no resource for further resistance. I also take into view that in whatever town or city detachments of our army are stationed, large numbers of our citizens find their way there, who, upon any sudden emergency, will be ready to perform military duty. I cannot suppose that there are at this moment, in the city of Mexico alone, less than a thousand of such auxiliaries, and if we include the teamsters and others, attached to the staff of the army, a much larger number.

Then, sir, we have it admitted that Gen. Scott's force is now not less than thirty-two thousand men, of all arms, upon his whole line, from Tampico to the city of Mexico. Of those let us suppose that some five thousand will be at all times on the sick list, or otherwise disabled, still there will remain an effective force of some twenty-seven thousand. But let it be taken for granted that the whole effective force at any one time will not exceed twenty-five thousand rank and file, you will have a force, after deducting the five thousand I have estimated as sufficient to hold your present conquests in that quarter, of twenty thousand, which can be moved in columns upon whatever other strongholds and populous districts you may think it expedient to seize and occupy, and which you announce as your present plan for coercing an early peace.

Well, sir, is not a disposable force of twenty thousand men sufficient for that purpose? When all your past conquests by Gen. Scott have been achieved by a force not exceeding fifteen thousand at all points, and now that the armies of the enemy have been dispersed, their munitions of war captured or destroyed, their financial resources exhausted, shall it be said that a force of thirty-two thousand men is not adequate for the further prosecution of the war in the interior of Mexico?

The honorable Senator, to enforce the argument in favor of the immediate adoption of the measure under debate, and in pursuance of the policy of raising a revenue in Mexico for the support of our army, informed the Senate that it was very desirable to take and occupy the rich mining States of Zacatecas and San Luis Potosi. Well, sir, this argument of the honorable Senator had scarcely escaped from his lips when, unluckily, news reached Washington that two columns or divisions of the army were now being organized, and were expected soon to march upon these important positions; and before this news grew cold, and following close upon its heels, we are put in receipt of a general order of the commanding general to the army to hold itself in readiness to overrun all Mexico. Confident in his resources and the sufficiency of the force already in the field, he makes no reference to reinforcements as expected or desired. To pursue this part of the argument a little further, let us suppose Zacatecas and San Luis Potosi are now in our possession, and that Queretaro will soon follow; if you estimate the force necessary to hold each of these States as high as two thousand, making six thousand in all, you will still have a force of fourteen thousand at your disposal, with which you can take and occupy other strongholds of the enemy, keep your communications open, and reinforce the divisions of the army at any point which may require to be strengthened.

But, sir, the main object of those extended operations of the army is declared to be to cause the pressure of the war to be felt by the whole population, to levy contributions, to seize the public revenues into our hands for the support of our army, and thus to dispose the minds of the Mexicans to a speedy termination of the war by a treaty. Well, sir, even while the argument is pressed by the honorable Senator upon this point, by another arrival of despatches from Mexico we are advised that General Scott has already, under instructions from the Government at Washington, issued an order for carrying this branch of its policy, in the further prosecution of the war, into effect. But what do we see upon looking into the order of General Scott? By a single stroke of his pen he abolishes the entire amount of transit duties and of the taxes exacted at the gates on all supplies to her city population—a branch of revenue which has heretofore yielded four and a half millions to the Government, and the one of all others felt to be the most burdensome and oppressive upon the people of Mexico! I am aware, sir, that it may be said that the revenue thus abolished may be supplied by the increased productiveness of the country, stimulated, as it will be, by this salutary exemption; that the revenues from all other sources will be augmented. I am aware, too, that, by another order of General Scott, the amount of revenue assessed upon the different States is greatly increased beyond the amount exacted under the Mexican Government. But I do not forget, at the same time, that General Scott, in pursuance of

the policy of the Government at Washington, and looking to a continued occupation of the country, has abolished other large sources of revenue. For example: lotteries are abolished, and the tobacco monopoly is to cease after this year. The proposition is, that the people of Mexico, in the further prosecution of this war, are to be made to feel its burdens, and, by the aggravated calamities brought upon them by subjecting their resources to the support of our army, to reconcile them to a treaty. But, instead of increasing their burdens, you relieve the industrial and enterprising classes of the inhabitants of a burden which, under their own Government, they held to be most oppressive. While you declare that your policy is to increase the burdens and calamities of the war, you lighten existing burdens. Instead of aggravation, your policy is one of conciliation. Instead of causing your military occupation to be felt as a grievance, you pursue a course calculated to display the beneficence of your sway. The industrial classes embrace a part of all the varieties of race of which the population is compounded; some of pure Indian blood; others of the casts or mixed races, and a considerable proportion of whites, and these compose the strength of what is called the Puros, or republican party in Mexico. This is the party which your plan of raising a revenue for the support of your army tends to conciliate. Yet this is the party which, at every step of your progress, from the commencement of the war, has resolutely opposed a treaty. They declare that your military occupation, your military government, is preferable to the domination of their own factions. The withdrawal of your army is what, it is said, they most dread. They want your protection; the benefits of your free institutions, and the support of your power and resources. This, too, is the party in Mexico by the aid of which you expect to establish such a Government as can give you a treaty with the security for the future which you demand. It has been proclaimed by the semi-official organs of your own Government, that this party desire annexation to the United States. You have, then, already taken the first step in the policy indicated in the message, and in the debate upon this question, of encouraging the formation of a new Government, to be founded on truly republican principles. You are already in alliance with them; and, inasmuch you say that it is your policy, in the vigorous prosecution of the war, to enforce a speedy peace, and this Puros party is known to be opposed to a treaty, you may be said to be the allies of the public enemy. It was only this morning that I saw it announced in the semi-official organ of the Administration published in this city, that twenty-eight members of the Congress now assembling at Queretaro, of the Puros party, have protested against any treaty that may be made with the United States. Such are the inconsistencies between your avowed policy at home, and your proceedings in Mexico; inconsistencies necessarily the result of the complex and double policy which had been adopted by the Administration.

Now, sir, am I mistaken in the position that the Administration has abandoned the expectation of a treaty with any existing Government in Mexico; and that this war is to be prolonged until such a Government is established under your protection, as shall be able to give you security for the future? I shall lose the point of my argument if this is not so; and I will thankfully listen to any explanation from the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, for I intend to build upon it.

The usual hour of adjournment having arrived, it was suggested that the Senator should defer the remainder of his remarks till to-morrow.

Mr. BELL signified that he should be glad to be so indulged.

Mr. CASS. For myself as an individual member of the Senate, I can say it will give me great pleasure to extend to the Senator the indulgence which he desires, in the state of his health, to adjourn this debate till to-morrow, in order to afford him an opportunity to finish his remarks. The honorable Senator has made two or three allusions in the course of his speech which I cannot but regard as personal to myself, and it is in reference to them I now desire to say a few words. The Senator repeatedly challenged contradiction, pausing as though he wished and expected reply. Assuming certain facts as the basis of his argument, he intimated we knew they were true; but when I arose to put the matter right at the moment the error was committed, I found the honorable Sen-



ator wished to continue his argument, with his facts, as he assumed them, till he had terminated his part of the debate. With a good deal of emphasis the Senator repeatedly asked "What do you want?" Addressing Senators on this side of the chamber, he asked "What do you demand from Mexico?" And it really seemed as if he expected one would rise and say that he wanted this, and another that he wanted that, and that the whole Senate—both sides of it, I suppose—was to be polled in this new kind of canvass, and to give their opinion and vote respecting the specific terms we ought to demand from Mexico. We are engaged in a war with a foreign nation. Its course, so far, has been prosperous and glorious, but no human being can predict its consequences, or when or how it will terminate. In this state of things it would be a most extraordinary instance of legislative imprudence if each member of this body should announce his own plan and policy, and denounce the projects of every other one. But, sir, all that a prudent Senator ought to do would be to lay down certain general principles, such, for example, as indemnity and security, amplifying his views of them as he pleased, without undertaking to specify precisely what ought or ought not to be accepted. And if the honorable gentleman had referred to some of my remarks previously made in the session, he would have discovered my views of this matter. I distinctly stated that the incipient steps of the negotiation were given to the President by the Constitution, and that, though I could not expect the gentlemen on the other side to have the same confidence in the Executive as myself and my friends on this side have, for one I was satisfied to leave them there, and to content myself with investigating the matter when it came before the Senate, and with voting aye or no upon the treaty. It was my view then, and I entertain the same sentiments now.

The Senator has made many allusions to the principle laid down by the President, and has emphatically repeated the terms, indemnity and security—security and indemnity, as though they announced some new discovery in diplomacy, and asks, in a triumphant tone, what they mean. The honorable Senator from Delaware (Mr. CLAYTON) had previously made the same inquiry, and he also seemed startled as though some new doctrine and practice were to mark our negotiations in Mexico. I will not take that honorable gentleman's witty definition, that indemnity means half and security the other half, but I will say that if indemnity means half, or whatever else it means, more or less, security means certainty and safety for its protection.

Mr. President: In the modern diplomacy of Europe, for the last three centuries, the principle of indemnity and security is as well known and enforced as any other principle of national intercommunication. There are two objects for which security may be demanded, depending upon existing circumstances. One has reference to an unstable Government and the other to an intractable hostile people; which of these securities this Government may think it necessary to demand, or whether both, and of what nature and extent, it is not for me to determine. These questions are with the Executive. There the Constitution has placed them, and there I am willing to leave them. Does the gentleman suppose that this Government will make a treaty without some reasonable prospect of its observance, or without adopting the necessary precautions for fidelity and good faith on the part of Mexico? When the Allies entered Paris, after the fall of Napoleon, the restored dynasty found the feelings of the French nation against them, and their political condition was uncertain and tottering. The great Powers, therefore, kept military possession of Paris, and of some other portions of France, as security till the new Government could gain strength, and evince a power and disposition to comply with their engagements. I merely refer to the fact in illustration of the general principle, and not because I have the slightest knowledge of the nature of the security which the Executive means to demand. Many other cases, sir, have happened, and many more may be imagined, in which temporary possession of important positions in a country may have been or may be necessary, where a feeble Government holds the power, in order to provide against its fall, if it should fall before its engagements are fulfilled.

Again, with regard to a hostile and intractable people, it may be necessary to obtain security against their unfriendly disposition. An open indefensible country, or a river which may be crossed any where, almost from its source to its mouth, may not be regarded as affording proper security against border incursions. A range of mountains—a natural barrier may be necessary. And in connection with this topic I will remark that the resolutions of the honorable Senator from Indiana (Mr. HANNEGAN) have led me to investigate this subject more narrowly than I had done before, and I am perfectly satisfied he is right, and that the Sierra Madre would make the proper boundary between us and Mexico on that frontier; and, as one member of the Senate, I hope this boundary will be obtained. That ridge of mountains is an extraordinary one, commencing at the Gulf of Mexico and running five or six hundred miles to the Paso del Norte, and with not more than five or six passes through which man can penetrate it. The rest is an eternal, impenetrable, impassable barrier—a natural wall which laughs to scorn that of China; and beyond is the great desert, destitute of water, and across which hostile expeditions can be pushed only with great difficulty. A very small force would hermetically close these passes through the ridge, and give us full security for our indemnity on that side.

The honorable Senator said he would astonish us with some of his remarks. He has fully redeemed his promise, and I confess myself very much astonished indeed. He seems to assert as a fact, and not to deduce as a conclusion, and calls upon us to contradict it if it is not so, that the Administration does not desire a peace with the Government of Mexico.

Mr. BELL. I did not say that. I said that this Administration had no confidence in the security which any treaty with the existing Government of Mexico could give for future peace, and

therefore did not desire a peace with any existing Government unless with security, which they did not believe the Government could afford.

Mr. CASS. The gentleman seems to assume as a given fact, and beyond dispute, and bases upon it his argument, that the Government does not desire a peace. And he stated expressly, that if the fact fails, his argument fails with it. Now, sir, I never heard one word of this before. If such be the case, the gentleman has penetrated far deeper into the recesses of Executive secrets than I have done. I believe that the Administration is not only willing but desirous to make a treaty with any Government in Mexico whose authority is recognized there, and to run the risk of proper security for the maintenance of it.

Mr. BELL. What security can any Government which now exists in Mexico give?

Mr. CASS. We have not yet got to that point. No Government in Mexico has yet made a treaty; our difficulty is not in the observance of the stipulations of a treaty, but in its formation. They have utterly refused to enter into any negotiation with us. It is not that there is an unstable Government, but that the Government rejects our offers. That is the difficulty we have experienced from the commencement of the war.

Mr. BELL. The very argument I assume is, that if they should make a treaty, you would have no confidence in it, as every treaty contains a clause of amity and peace. Then I want to know whether the honorable gentleman would consider any treaty by the existing Government of Mexico, ceding the provinces of New Mexico and California, as bringing with it "security for the future," which, according to his construction, the phrase implies? And would they rely upon such a treaty as affording the security?

Mr. CASS. The gentleman asks me whether a stipulation for peace and amity would be regarded as security? Why, such a declaration alone would not be regarded as security from any unstable Government. Something more would be necessary till its position was more secure. I take it for granted that this Administration, when it makes a peace with Mexico, should its Government then appear to be unstable, would require some security for the observance of the stipulations of the peace. The general principles of security, whether against a Government or a People, I have already stated. Their application is with the Executive. As to the continuation of the war, sir, I have merely to remark that we have but one duty, and that is to push our operations as all other nations have done, and will do till an honorable peace is obtained. There is a point in all wars where national obduracy must give way, and where submission becomes cheaper than resistance. It is when the results of the war have proclaimed the impossibility of continuing the contest. This may seem harsh, but it is founded in human nature. Our true policy is to carry on the war with all our might till its objects are accomplished. Those objects ought to be just, and we believe them to be so, and our exertions ought not to be relaxed by any crude notions of mistaken philanthropy. The Mexicans are like all other people. Their point of submission will be found, as that of others has been found before them. They must eat, and sow, and reap, and wear clothing, and preserve the institutions of social life; and I repeat that their injustice will give way before our exertions, if these are continued.

I state again, sir, that I have two answers to the honorable Senator from Tennessee. One is, that his case is a supposititious one, and that we have not arrived at the point when it is necessary to decide upon the security to be taken, as our offers have been utterly rejected; and the other is, that, when the time comes for determining that question, the Executive will no doubt take such security, if security be then necessary, as circumstances may require.

One word more. The honorable Senator has said that in my opening speech I said I knew no more of the policy of the Executive, than was disclosed in the documents. I said nothing like it. The honorable Senator is under an entire misapprehension.

Mr. BELL. It struck me with great force at the time.

Mr. CASS. I will read what I did say: "I know nothing more of the proposed plan of campaign than is disclosed in that part of the Report of the Secretary of War which has just been read to the Senate." This is what I said, and why? First, because it was true; and secondly, because the plan of the Secretary of War was one of the most elaborate and detailed plans ever submitted to the legislative department of a Government. I do not see how he could have been more particular, unless he had said that on such a day we should enter Queretaro, on such a day San Louis, and so on, disclosing every step of the campaign till its objects should be thwarted or attained. It was, therefore, as the honorable Senator will perceive, not of the policy of the Government that I spoke, but of the plans of the campaign.

The honorable Senator has spoken of the force which General Scott considers necessary to maintain our present command of the country.

If the honorable Senator will advert to a document sent into the Senate the other day, and I think published in the *Intelligencer*, he will find that the force estimated by General Scott as necessary for this purpose, adding to it I believe one or two expeditions, is thirty thousand men. Instead of two thousand, which the Senator deems sufficient to hold the city of Mexico, Gen. Scott considers a garrison of seven thousand or seven thousand five hundred requisite for that object.

Mr. BELL. I have heard the explanations of the gentleman with a great deal of pleasure, but they do not satisfy me that my argument has been at all impaired.



FEBRUARY 3.

The Senate having resumed the consideration of the Ten Regiment bill—

Mr. BELL. Mr. President, in the course of the remarks which I had the honor to present to the Senate yesterday, I endeavored to show that the Administration could not, consistently with their avowed policy, make a treaty with any existing Government in Mexico; and I undertook to show the facts and circumstances on which my argument was based. I referred, in the first place, to the grounds on which this bill was pressed in this body, and, secondly, to the operations of our army itself, as affording evidence that there was no design, no desire to accept any treaty from the existing Government; and I called upon honorable Senators on the other side of the chamber, if they pleased, in their discretion, to say whether that was not their view of the now settled policy of the Administration. I put the question distinctly and directly whether a treaty by the existing Government in Mexico, ceding New Mexico and California to the United States, would be regarded as satisfactory. I supposed that they would be obliged to answer in the negative, upon the ground that, although affording ample "indemnity for the past," it did not afford "security for the future," and that these terms were a substantive part of the settled policy of the Executive. I further said, what I observed might be regarded as a bold assertion, that the Administration neither expected nor desired a treaty with any existing Government in Mexico. I did not say that I would astonish Senators by my remarks, as the honorable Senator represented me as having done. The honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs says it was true that he was astonished. But when he came to answer the interrogatory, "Will you accept a treaty from the existing Government ceding those territories which you have heretofore admitted to be ample indemnity?" he could not answer in the affirmative. He answered precisely as I supposed he was bound to answer. It was for the purpose of bringing out these answers that I submitted these inquiries, in a manner which he regarded as going beyond the due parliamentary license. My object indeed was to press gentlemen, and that gentleman in particular, because he stood at the head of that committee, and is supposed to know the policy of the Administration on a question so important as the present. He answered, then, in substance, as I supposed he was obliged to answer, that they could not take a treaty from any existing Government, or any faction which might arise, if no security for future peace was conceded. And when the question was further pressed on the distinguished gentleman, "What do you mean by security?" he replied that his attention had been directed by the resolutions of the gentleman from Indiana to the Sierra Madre as a proper boundary; but he did not limit his "security" to that line. He went on to speak of the right of the conqueror, when the Government of the conquered nation was unsettled—when anarchy took the place of order, and the people were turbulent—to hold possession of the conquered country as security for future peace; and he referred us to the case of the Allied Powers, who had kept military occupation of France for a twelvemonth as security for the maintenance of the peace which they had concluded with the new Government.

Well, these answers of the honorable gentleman are perfectly natural, rational, and consistent with the policy of the Administration, as I understand it. A military occupation of the interior of the country, to some extent, is now contemplated by the admission of the Senator. What portion of the country is to be occupied, and how long the occupation is to continue, are, as the distinguished gentleman said, things which he could not now point out, as they were to be governed necessarily by contingencies. I shall hereafter show that this is a policy from which they can never extricate themselves but by holding the country by right of conquest, unless they abandon all that they have done—patch up the best treaty they can with the present Government, and under the wings of it flee the country. One word, though out of place, in answer to the statement of the honorable chair-



man of the Committee on Military Affairs that General Scott estimates seven thousand five hundred as a proper force to be stationed in the city of Mexico. I have never seen, sir, the letter of General Scott, which is said to contain these estimates; but I cannot imagine that such a force at that point would be at all necessary, except as a *corps de reserve*—an army of observation, to be employed in the support of other divisions of the army engaged in holding the neighboring States. My estimate of a sufficient garrison for the city of Mexico was founded upon the idea that all the strongholds, and adjoining and populous States, would be first subdued and occupied by an adequate force. I cannot believe that General Scott, under the circumstances I had supposed, would consider an army of seven thousand five hundred necessary to hold a city, large as it is, which he captured with a force reduced to six thousand, and when defended by a force three or four times as numerous—now that the enemy had neither army nor resources.

I now propose to resume my argument at the point at which I had arrived when the Senate did me the favor to adjourn—the policy of the Government exhibited in the orders of General Scott, in carrying out the plan of raising a revenue in Mexico.

In further support of the views I presented on yesterday, I might have alluded to some parts of the argument of the gallant and distinguished Senator from Mississippi, (Mr. DAVIS,) who spoke several times on incidental points in this debate. I remember—I do not see him in his seat now, but I trust I do not misrepresent him—that he pressed, with some earnestness, (and, as in all cases when he has addressed the Senate, addressing himself to the feelings as well as the judgment of Senators,) the argument that the passage of this bill was necessary to relieve broken-down remnants of regiments that had fought through several sanguinary actions with the enemy; regiments which had been reduced from eight hundred or a thousand men to two or three hundred. But what I particularly remarked was his argument in favor of regulars instead of volunteers. He said that, however valuable volunteers might be in action, when an army was in motion, that there was no comparison between their value in a protracted military occupation like this and regular soldiers. And, as I understood him, he considered that it would be chiefly garrison duty to which the army would hereafter be called in Mexico—the holding of the conquered towns and fortresses. I noticed this, and bring it to the attention of the Senate for the purpose of showing that the tenor of the argument generally on the other side tends to support the views which I have advanced. Not only is it the policy of the Administration not to make a treaty with the existing Government, because they cannot obtain the “security” which they demand, but it is to continue the military occupation of the country.

[Mr. DAVIS, of Mississippi, said in substance, that he disclaimed the idea of an additional military force to fix the limits of territorial acquisition, much less to interfere with the political condition of Mexico. He wished to increase the army in Mexico so that its visible strength might destroy all hope of successful resistance. His preference to regulars was in reference to garrison duty, in holding the necessary posts on lines of communication. He had before spoken of a military line from the Atlantic to the Pacific, along the range of the Sierra Madre. His policy was to occupy that line. He was opposed to the permanent occupation of Mexico. He thought that Herrera, sustained by the new Congress and the new army of Mexico, was competent to make a treaty and sustain his Government against the assaults of faction. We ought to treat with it, and he devoutly prayed that we might treat before he (Mr. B.) should close his argument.]

Mr. BELL. I unite heartily in the prayer of the Senator that we may have peace. In regard to his remarks I have only to say that there may have been, as I stated yesterday, a modified policy adopted, and one which would be consistent with the line of the Sierra Madre as the “security” which they want. But I think this is at last a new construction, assumed by the distinguished Senator from Mississippi as one satisfactory to him, of the term “security for the future.”

Mr. DAVIS. Assumed last November a year ago.

Mr. BELL. He is consistent. Can he answer for other honorable Senators—for the Administration of this Government? For the power which has greater influence than he or the Senate too, unless we choose by the united voice of the two

Houses to control it? Can he answer that he has the concurrence of one-third of this body—I mean of those on his side of the chamber? What security will such a line give for peace? The reason why they did not retire to a line twelve months ago was that they had no treaty, no peace. They wanted to coerce a peace.

Mr. DOWNS. I ask the Senator what line he would be willing to accept?

Mr. BELL. I do not mean any discourtesy, but I beg to inform the Senator that before I close my remarks I will state my views upon that point. My argument is intended to demonstrate that the Administration is already carrying out their policy of holding the country by military occupation until a Government may be formed, matured, and strengthened into such a degree of consistency that it will be able to give the securities demanded. I may be wrong, however. Senators on the other side of the chamber, it is very obvious, are not united in sentiment upon this subject. Some distinguished Senators who have spoken differ with the Administration, if we look at what is said in the message and among themselves. And I may say, looking at the immense magnitude of the question, honorable gentlemen may well differ. It is a fearful question in some of its aspects.

Assuming as I do, and I think upon the strongest ground, that the military occupation of Mexico is to be continued until such a government shall be established as shall afford the desired security, I propose to inquire whether the undertaking be practicable. I ask the attention of the Senate to the statement of a few prominent facts, in relation to the character and condition of the Mexican population, collected from the best sources of information within my reach.

I know a distinguished Senator (Mr. BENTON) who is far better informed than I am upon this subject, and whose judgment would be entitled to far greater weight. It was my fortune, many years ago, to listen to an argument of that Senator, before a different tribunal, in which his familiar and extensive knowledge of the Spanish character, their colonial policy, their laws and institutions, was manifest. He knows well the materials which now exist in Mexico for forming a government, and he knows the obstacles that lie in the way. I trust that we shall yet hear from that distinguished Senator, who now sits so much at his ease on the other side of this chamber, upon this subject.

The best informed differ in their estimates of the population of Mexico. Some rate it at eight or ten millions, and others as low as seven millions. I assume eight millions as the medium. Of the eight millions there are probably not less than five millions of Indians of pure blood; two millions of what are denominated the castes or mixed races, consisting of mestizos, mulattoes, and zombos, who rank in society in the order in which I have mentioned them; and one million of the Spanish or white race. Between these several races or castes there exists a reciprocal antipathy, amounting to contempt on the one side, and jealousy and hatred on the other. A white skin is still, as at the period of the conquest, a patent of nobility, and just in proportion to the mixture of the blood of the white man which flows in the veins of the several castes, do they assert a superiority over all below them. The antipathies and jealousies founded on the distinction of races appear, from all history, to be deeply seated in natural causes and principles. In Mexico these natural causes were strengthened and fostered by the jealous policy of the Spanish monarchy.\* The laws and institutions of the vice regal government of the colonies cultivated and promoted the natural antipathy and hatred between the Indian and the white and mixed races, as a means of maintaining the dominion of the parent country against the influence and ambition of the Spanish creole population, which were always a subject of serious alarm to the Spanish monarch. But the emancipation of Mexico from the dominion of Spain appears to have wrought but little change in the general condition or the disposition of the several castes or races towards each other. At the breaking out and during the revolution, the Spanish race, from motives of policy, conciliated the castes or mixed races by allowing them a higher grade in society; but, except the cultivated class among the



mixed races, they still rank below the white race. Of this compound mass of population, the white race now, as at all times, are the real lords of the country; asserting the natural superiority of their race, and controlling all others. They, together with the cultivated portion of the mixed race, are also the holders of nearly all the property of the country. The higher clergy, the military, and high civil functionaries, are all taken from this class; and, in the practical operation of the Mexican Government, the clergy and military constitute a privileged class. They are such by the legal exemptions which they enjoy. The castes or mixed race are next in degree of influence and importance, both in social and political relations; but, with the exception of the cultivated few among them, they are a degraded class. But it is the vast Indian population which most demands our attention. They are as they have been for three centuries—a degraded, dependant, melancholy race; poverty stricken, ignorant; a living but inanimate mass of human beings; outcasts in their own land, taking no interest in public affairs, though recognised as freemen by the Mexican constitution; their religion a mummery, and even, it is said, in many districts indulging their ancient superstitions; residing in separate villages, and cultivating a small allotment of land in common. Such is their general condition, especially in the populous States of the South. Until the period of the revolution they were in a state of pupillage, and not allowed by law to contract debts beyond the small sum of three dollars. They were, for the reasons I have before stated, kept in a state of rigorous seclusion—no white man being by law permitted to settle in their villages. From this, I admit, very imperfect description of the condition of the different races which compose the population of Mexico, it will be readily granted that there is, there can be, no sympathy—no common ties to unite them; there can be no unity, no individuality, no nationality, no equality of social condition; but, on the contrary, irreconcilable hatreds and jealousies. Yet such are the materials out of which it is proposed to construct a government upon the principles of republican equality; such a government as will hereafter stand against all the assaults of faction. But I have not stated all obstacles to such a scheme. In no country of the world is there so great a degree of inequality in the distribution of property. Even among the white race this inequality stands out as a prominent feature in their relative condition. This of itself is a great obstacle, and you must resort to confiscation and banishment to secure a settled Government founded upon equal rights and privileges.

Again, sir, when you shall attempt to regenerate and enlighten the Indian masses, you will have to encounter the inconvenience of twenty different languages, now spoken in different States and districts of Mexico.

There is another circumstance in the condition of Mexico which, to my mind, presents an insuperable barrier to the policy of founding or sustaining the sort of Government which seems to be contemplated; the only sort of Government which our system will tolerate. Besides the want of all affinity and sympathy between the different castes, and the inequality in their social conditions, even the better informed classes, in the march of mind, in intellectual development, are centuries in the rear of the like classes in most of the States of Europe and of this country. The overweening influence of the hierarchy, of the higher clergy, in matters of Government concern, and the despotism which prevails in the religion of Mexico, are at once the evidence, and may be the cause, of this intellectual inferiority. I say nothing of the Romish Church, as to its orthodoxy or otherwise. It may be the truest and purest of the sects; it may be the true primitive or apostolic faith; with this I have nothing to do; but it is remarkable that, from the days of Luther to this day, wherever Protestantism has most prevailed, there you find planted deepest and strongest the seeds and the growth of civil liberty; and I affirm that where there is no freedom of religious inquiry, no religious toleration, there has been no such resurrection of mind as qualifies the inhabitants for the enjoyment of a free and equal Government.



But it is said this party of the Puros, which I have already noticed, embracing a large class—the industrious and enterprising of all the different castes, the ranchero or small proprietor, the artisan and the merchant, including the muleteers, said to be respectable for their honesty, and the professions, altogether combining a large share of intelligence—are friendly to the present policy of this Administration, and that with the aid and through the instrumentality of their chiefs or leaders you can build up a Government. It is with this party in Mexico, as I have already shown, that you are in some sort in alliance. And I now assert that you cannot take another step in this policy with safety and honor; that from the moment of your entrance upon the next stage of progress in the execution of this policy, you will be committed beyond retreat. No, sir, the moment you compromise this party by calling their chiefs and representatives together for the purpose of forming a new government, you are irrevocably bound to the policy of a continued military occupation. You expose them to the never-dying hostility and resentment of every other interest and faction in Mexico; of the hierarchy, who fear the overthrow of their religion; of the large landed proprietors and the military, who fear the extinction of their long-enjoyed power and influence; and if there be any remains of the ancient Castilian pride and spirit in the country, it will be roused to indignant and inextinguishable opposition to those of their own countrymen who may lend themselves to the project of forming a Government under the protection of foreign bayonets. No, sir, when you shall have once committed yourselves fully to this policy, in conjunction with the Puros, you can never abandon them. It would be perfidious and disgraceful to do so. The civilized world would cry out against you, should you leave them to the vengeance of their powerful enemies.

But, if you allow no force to this argument, when you shall have constituted this new Government under the protection of your armies, how long is the experiment of its stability to be continued? When will you know that you may safely withdraw your army? How long is it supposed your nurture will be required, before you can leave your bantling to stand alone? When all shall be quiet, when there shall be no hostile array in the country? Does any one doubt that, from the moment when your armies shall have overrun the whole country, and every stronghold and large city shall be occupied by your garrisons; when the present hostile chiefs shall have found that further resistance will be fruitless against your overwhelming forces, that they will retire to their estates and submit to your authority? Then all will be peace; but will they carry with them no slumbering spirit of resentment; no fierce determination of resistance and revenge, to be stirred into action the moment you shall fancy that all is safe, and you shall withdraw your forces? Do you consider the race with which you have to deal? They are the descendants in part of the Celtiberians, who are said, in ancient history, never to have sighed in death—the terror of the armies of Rome, and who, in the defence of Numantia, their last remaining fortress, preferred perishing by famine, to submission to Roman aggression; in part, of the Suevi and Visigoths, who finally crushed that colossal Power. They are Spaniards, who walk the streets and highway, carrying the stiletto under their sleeve, the dagger under the folds of their cloaks, and bide their time. The race has deteriorated; but still blood will show itself, at the distance of centuries, when the cup of bitterness overflows, and when the oppressor least expects it.

I have inquired how long this experiment of establishing a stable Government in Mexico, by military occupation, is to continue; and if it will not be regarded as too great a descent from higher considerations, I would now inquire what is to be the cost of this experiment? Does any one imagine that a less period than from three to five years will be sufficient to overcome all the obstacles which now exist to a settled Government in Mexico? I may be told that after one or two years the army of occupation may be safely reduced one-half, or to a force of twenty-five thousand. But this must depend upon contingencies. I have already stated that an army of fifty thousand men cannot be supported in Mexico at a less annual cost

than \$40,000,000. I have also supposed that, after you shall have subdued all the States to your authority, and with the assistance of your navy you blockade her ports, you may derive a revenue of \$10,000,000 from Mexico. This will leave an annual cost to this country of \$30,000,000 for the army alone, until the force in Mexico can be safely reduced. But the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, in giving his views of the importance of occupying the mining districts of Zacatecas and San Louis Potosi, informed us that he had received assurances from a distinguished officer in Mexico that a revenue might be derived from these States so large that he would decline stating the amount lest it should be deemed incredible. And this is the mode by which this country is to be reconciled to the military occupation of Mexico for a series of years. Why, one would be led to suppose that the army had nothing to do but to seize the mines, and that they would find the silver and gold already separated from the ore, and in marvellous quantities; or that the mines could continue to be wrought by the proprietors, and all the products be handed over to our collecting officers. But does not every Senator know that the mining of the precious metals is conducted with immense cost, and that all that the Government or the army can exact cannot exceed a rate which will leave a due profit to the proprietors. You surely do not mean to employ your officers and soldiers in working the mines. From the grasping character of the Mexican Government, to say nothing of its necessities, it may well be supposed that the produce of the mines was taxed at the highest rate it could bear; and I have never seen an estimate of the amount of revenue drawn from that source, including the tax on coinage, which exceeds two millions, including the transit duty. The gross annual product of the mines in all Mexico does not exceed \$20,000,000, and twenty per cent. on \$20,000,000 would be one-fifth, the highest assessment levied by the Government of Spain in the days of the Viceroyal Government. In addition to the revenue derived from this source, if you should succeed in reviving the foreign trade of the country, continue the blockade of all the ports of Mexico, and keep the communication with the interior open, you may derive \$6,000,000 from the customs. Besides these, you can collect \$3,000,000 in direct taxes. Thus, after abolishing the tobacco monopoly, the internal duties, and lotteries, and surrendering the remaining sources of revenue to the States or local Governments, which in pursuance of the policy of the Administration you have already done, \$11,000,000 will be the highest amount of revenue you can expect to derive for the support of your army, and this only after you shall have overrun and occupied all the States. At this time, supposing that you have reduced Zacatecas, San Louis Potosi, and Queretaro to your authority, you are in possession of ten States, and, if Chihuahua is to be included, eleven. General Scott, by his financial regulations in Mexico, has imposed upon the several States in Mexico \$3,000,000, payable monthly by the States occupied by our army. At this rate, \$1,000,000 may be derived from the eleven States now in our power within a year. You may be receiving \$2,000,000 from the customs and \$500,000 from all other sources of revenue not abandoned or surrendered to the States. Thus, the whole amount of revenue, after all your brilliant successes, you are now in the receipt of, in pursuance of the policy of compelling Mexico to pay the expense of the military occupation of the country, does not exceed the rate of \$3,500,000.

But, Mr. President, these are mere speculations, and, after all, of little importance to the country. This question involves higher consequences. By the time you shall have perfected your financial regulations in Mexico, and long before you shall have given such strength and power to the new Government you propose to erect; long before you shall see the day when you can safely withdraw your army from Mexico, with the securities you desire, a new element of control will have intervened; a new and potent influence will have sprung up to set all your plans at naught. Sir, the moment it shall become your known and settled policy to continue the armed occupation of Mexico; that you propose to occupy all the large towns with a competent force to ensure tranquility; that you intend to extend your

protection to the highways and all other channels of trade and intercourse, and that this military protection is to endure for a series of years, as it must endure, what must be the inevitable consequence? A current of immigration will set towards Mexico from this country, as irresistible as the torrent of Niagara. The youthful, ardent, and enterprising classes of this country, attracted by the thousand rumors which go forth of the untold wealth of the Mexican mines; of the wide and yet unoccupied field for successful enterprise in every branch of industry, will soon spread themselves over the whole country. They will become proprietors of the soil; under the guaranty of the new Government of your formation, they will become agriculturalists, establish factories, and become the most useful and productive class in the country. They will send for their families, or form family connexions with the native white population. Yes, sir, before two years shall have passed in the execution of your present policy, hundreds of thousands of your own citizens will have become domiciled in Mexico. Your citizen soldiers, too, will have become reconciled to a permanent residence in the land their arms have conquered. They, too, will have contracted ties and obligations which they will not be willing to abandon. Then, when you shall suppose that the time has come when you can safely withdraw your army, a cry of remonstrance will come up from Mexico, such as will find an echo, a lively sympathy at home, in the hearts of tens of thousands who now imagine that no necessity can ever arise strong enough to reconcile them to the subjugation of the whole of Mexico. These influences will be felt in all the departments of the Government; they will be felt in this chamber. It will not be the Puros only, but it will be your own countrymen who will call upon you to save them, their families, and their property from the resentment, oppression, and spoliation of the powerful factions which will be ready to spring up and overturn the new Government. That "force of circumstances," so often and so significantly alluded to in this debate, will then acquire tenfold power over the sentiments and opinions of the people of this country, and over the public councils. It was heretofore strong enough to impel you to the policy of continuing this war, by carrying your arms to the heart of Mexico, and then to engage you in the plan of creating a new Government; and it will at last impel you, with far greater reason, to hold the permanent sovereignty of the whole country by right of conquest.

This, sir, will be the last act in the great political drama we are now enacting. This is to be the consummation of the policy already shadowed forth in the message. This is not merely a nascent policy; it exists not in embryo only; I have attempted to show that it has germinated already. That it is not merely a vague, floating idea in the brain of the President, will fully appear from the message. I beg leave to read a few passages from it. After alluding to the probable "insecurity of the present Government in Mexico," and suggesting that it may become proper to give "assurances of protection to the friends of peace in Mexico, in the establishment and maintenance of a new republican government of their own choice," and thus converting the "war which Mexico has forced upon us into an enduring blessing to herself," the President concludes what he had to say upon this part of the subject in this significant language:

"If, after affording this encouragement and protection, and after all the persevering and sincere efforts we have made, from the moment Mexico commenced the war, and prior to that time, to adjust our differences with her, we shall ultimately fail, then we shall have exhausted all honorable means in pursuit of peace, and must *continue to occupy her country with our troops, taking the full measure of indemnity into our own hands, and must enforce the terms which our honor demands.*"

What "the taking of the full measure of indemnity into our hands" points to, whoever now doubts cannot be influenced by any reasoning it is in my power to employ.

But it is not the President only who appears to have looked to the permanent acquisition of all Mexico as the probable result of the policy now pursued in the prosecution of the war. I have in my hands a copy of a letter addressed by the



Secretary of State, (Mr. Buchanan,) upon this subject, to a public meeting in Philadelphia, in which he sums up the views upon the war question in the following language :

"The capital of Mexico is now the headquarters of our conquering army; and yet, such is the genius of our free institutions, that, for the first time, its peaceful and well-disposed citizens enjoy security in their private rights, and the advantage of a just and firm government. From all that can be learned they appreciate our protection at its proper value, and dread nothing so much as the withdrawal of our army. They know this would be the signal for renewed and fierce dissensions among their military leaders, in which the Mexican people would become the victims. In this wretched condition of affairs justice to them and to ourselves may require that we should protect them in establishing, upon a permanent basis, a republican government, able and willing to conclude and maintain an equitable treaty of peace with the United States. After every effort to obtain such a treaty, should we finally fail in accomplishing the object, and should the military factions in Mexico still persist in waging upon us a fruitless war, then we must fulfil the destiny which Providence may have in store for both countries.

"In any event, we owe it to the glories of the past, to the duties of the present, and the hopes of the future, never to falter in the vigorous prosecution of this war until we shall have secured a just and honorable peace. The people of the United States will act upon this determination as surely as that indomitable perseverance in a righteous cause is a characteristic of our race."

But other powerful and influential supporters of the Administration have also furnished pregnant and alarming evidences that this idea of conquering and holding all Mexico has been largely entertained. Need I refer to the resolution introduced into this body by my friend the Senator from Indiana, (Mr. HANNEGAN,) or to the resolution on the same subject introduced by the Senator from New York, (Mr. DICKINSON?) They speak for themselves.

There are others who have spoken upon this subject too prominent in the country to be passed over without notice here. I allude to opinions expressed by officers of the army. I have understood that a letter has appeared in one of the public journals of the country, from a distinguished and gallant general recently returned from Mexico, (General Quitman,) in which he expressed himself favorably to this policy. I would be sorry to misrepresent this distinguished officer, for I have a high respect both for his patriotism and his intelligence; and if I am in error, and any honorable Senator has it in his power to set me right, I will thank him to do so. Another gallant and distinguished general, (General Shields,) I observe, has expressed the sentiment, on a public convivial occasion, that the Whigs are "warring against a high and indomitable necessity."

The distinguished and able chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs has told us that although he does not anticipate the annexation of all Mexico, yet that he sees nothing so alarming in such a result. I could multiply the proofs, beyond the patience of the Senate to listen to, that this gigantic scheme of annexation has been gravely considered and found favor with the Administration, if it be not its settled policy. But, sir, whatever may be the real views of the President and his Cabinet upon the subject, I have, I think, conclusively shown that the inevitable tendency and results of the policy they advocate, and which is now in full progress in Mexico, is and will be its subjugation. Considering this point established, it becomes a duty of the last importance to consider now—I say now, while we have it in our power to control the future issues of this war—what we shall do with all Mexico when it is annexed to the Union? Yes, sir, I repeat the question—what will you do with it? Will you annex it in the form of States? Let us see what will be the consequences of such a procedure. The several States or provinces of Mexico, twenty-one in number, now enjoy a separate political organization, with sufficient population in each to form a State under our system, except two. These may be well merged into one; which would still leave twenty new States to be admitted into the Union, besides the territories, by a single legislative fiat. By the constitution of the United States you are bound to guaranty a republican form of government to any new State admitted into the Union. Well, sir, besides three millions of the white and mixed races, there will be in the twenty States of Mexico a population of five millions of Indians of the pure aboriginal stock. They are

freemen by the present laws and constitution of Mexico. What will the spirit of progressive democracy, which now exercises so large an influence in this country, prescribe as to them? Would it not claim for them the enjoyment of the right of suffrage? Is it not the genius of this new and enlarged system of political philosophy to inculcate fraternal union upon the most perfect equality with all mankind? But suppose this point waved, and that it shall be determined to suspend the political rights and privileges of the Indian for a time; still, upon the principles of our own established system, you must permit them to be represented in the National Legislature. They are freemen, of a race superior to the African, and you cannot deny to the States of which they compose a majority of the population this right. Then, assuming one hundred thousand as the ratio of representation, you will have eighty new members added to the House of Representatives; fifty of whom will represent an Indian population alone. But it is the Senate that I may congratulate upon the largest addition to its present dignity and importance. We shall have forty new Senators; and as the mixed races of Mexico are, by habit and by a just tribute to mental superiority, admitted to an equality of social and political privileges, it is to be hoped that we shall always have a portion of the new Senators of this caste, who, by the novelty of their complexion, will give new interest and attraction to this body. Why, sir, at this rate of advance in our schemes of national aggrandizement we shall be subject to great changes of every description. This Capitol will be found to have been projected upon quite too limited and narrow a view of our destiny. We shall have to dispense with it, and rear one commensurate with the grandeur of our system; or, rather, it will soon become expedient to centralize the national metropolis.

But, sir, you hesitate; you recoil from this view of the subject; you turn aside from this picture, and say you will adopt a policy less revolting to the popular feelings and judgment; that for a time, at least, you will hold Mexico in the form of territories or provinces subject to your regulation; that in this mode you will govern Mexico until by immigration there shall be such an infusion of the white race in all the provinces as to secure to them the superiority of numbers and influence; and then you can adopt them into the Union as States, upon an equal footing with the present States. But you will still have five millions of Indians on hand, to be an ever-eating canker on your system. What will you do with these? They must have space; you must leave them their villages and commons; you cannot drive them into the Pacific on the one side, or into the Gulf on the other. You cannot exterminate them; you will not be more cruel than the Spaniards. You say that you will take them under your tutelage; that you will enlighten them, commencing with your military officers and soldiers as their first teachers, and the bayonet for the rod of discipline; that you will stimulate this inanimate mass into life and energy by the influences of trade—by giving them the benefits of just and equal laws; that you will thus gradually induct them into the knowledge and duties of free institutions, and that, after the lapse of a few generations, you may hope they will be qualified to enjoy all the privileges of the white race. A happy termination to this beneficent scheme! But all history, all experience, is against it.

There is another consideration deserving attention, though of less importance, when you shall have resolved upon holding Mexico as an appendage or subject province or provinces. What will you do with the public debt of Mexico, which is said to be now \$100,000,000, \$60,000,000 of which is due to foreign creditors? Will you repudiate it? If you do you may bring an old house down upon your heads. Will you seize and confiscate the property and estates of the clergy? It is said the higher clergy have a great amount of debt against the large proprietors of mines and other estates, secured by mortgages. I have heard it estimated as high as \$170,000,000. I have it also upon good authority that the Puros party, in conjunction with which you propose to establish a new Government, have long contemplated, as one of their objects in aspiring to power, the confiscation of those debts to pay the public debt of the country, and to appropriate the remainder to the construction of roads and other works of general utility. Will you carry out this policy when you shall assume the absolute dominion of Mexico? If you do, what will you say? How will you excuse yourselves to the new Pope of Rome and Bishop Hughes? These are troublesome questions, but I trust that Senators will see that they deserve consideration.

Permit me now, sir, to call the attention of the Senate to some of the further consequences which may attend this scheme of conquest and annexation. When it shall be



known in Europe that you have solemnly decided upon the policy of extending your dominion over all Mexico, will there be no disposition among the large and powerful States of that continent to interpose and prevent the consummation of your magnificent scheme of national aggrandizement? Upon this point, I would respectfully inquire of the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs if the disposition of foreign courts has been sounded on this subject? I can hardly suppose that it has not been done. It may and probably will be said that we will permit no interference of any foreign Power; that they have no right to interfere, and the moment such a movement is made the whole population will rise up to resist the audacious attempt. Still, sir, the great Powers of Europe may choose to interfere. I do not think they will, for several reasons. Great Britain, with her large colonial possessions on our northern border, and her commercial interests and ascendancy, will have most cause to watch our career of conquest; but still she, with the other monarchies of Europe, may look on in quiet complacency, shrewdly supposing that we may, in our extravagant attempts on all Mexico, do for ourselves the worst that their united arms could do, and with far less cost to them; that the subjugation of Mexico will be a perpetual drain upon our resources, and reduce instead of adding to our present rank as a military Power. Perhaps, too, they may indulge the expectation that in the mad career we are entering upon, that model system of free representative government—that mirror system established in America, which has so long reflected back upon Europe an image of freedom and prosperity and happiness, so seductive yet so dangerous to themselves, will be broken in pieces, never more to be reconstructed.

There are other reasons, however, which may control the councils of Europe. They have their troubles at home. England has her Ireland, France her Algeria, to tax their resources and hold them in check. France, in a period of no little agitation, and with a population which the consummate skill and statesmanship of Louis Philippe has failed to unite, is on the eve of entering upon the experiment of a regency under the reign of a minority prince. England and France are jealous of each other, and both look with fearful apprehension to the designs of the Autocrat of the north—the great Northern Bear, who only waits the embroilment of those two Powers with each other, or with America, to stretch forth one of his huge paws to draw to his strong embrace the dominions of the Grand Turk, and with the other to grasp British India, with an internal capacity still remaining sufficient to engulf all Europe, as occasion may offer.

Still, sir, England and France, disregarding all other considerations, may conclude that their commercial and other interests require them to unite in a forcible interference with a policy which looks to the establishment of an unlimited dominion upon this continent; and it becomes us to estimate the consequences of such a determination on their part. The war in which we shall then be engaged will not be confined to the land; it will be an ocean warfare also. To meet their united naval armament of a thousand ships of war we must enlarge our own naval establishment in a corresponding degree. When Mexico shall find such allies—when the disciplined legions of the combined enemy shall be brought to her assistance on land, instead of fifty we shall be called on to send one hundred thousand troops to Mexico, and have as many more to defend our sea coast, then extending from the mouth of the Oregon to the Gulf of Tehuantepec on the Pacific, and from the Bay of Honduras to the Bay of Fundy on the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic. Who shall estimate the cost of maintaining such armaments, both by sea and land, as it would then be incumbent upon you to supply? To say that a hundred millions per annum would cover the cost of such a war would be under rather than over the mark. And where will be your resources when your foreign commerce shall be annihilated? Sir, it may be wise and patriotic to speak of foreign interference as an event to be defied, but it is also the part of wisdom to consider that it is possible, if not probable, and to make our account accordingly. I know, sir, Senators may exclaim, who dreams of such a result as a foreign interference, as a war with England and France! Who, sir, ought not to dream of such results when they understand the tendency of our present policy in regard to Mexico? And how often has it happened that the greatest misfortunes have befallen a country because her statesmen have failed to dream in time of the dangers which impended over it.

I must say, sir, upon this subject of foreign intervention, that the course of this Government is any thing but conciliatory towards the Powers of Europe. At a moment when you have already seized upon New Mexico and California, and declared your intention never to surrender them, and when at the same time you are preparing to grasp all Mexico, you proclaim to the world your determination to allow no transatlantic Power to acquire any further foothold in America. While, by this declaration, you announce what may pass as a sound policy, by your practice you take away all merit from the



motive. You will suffer no other Power to add to their dominion by taking advantage of the feeble and distracted condition of the States of Spanish origin, while you claim the privilege to despoil them at discretion. You will have no partners in the work of territorial spoliation; you claim a monopoly of the spoil and plunder of America.

I now propose, Mr. President, to address myself to another branch of the subject. What will be the effect of subjugating all Mexico, and holding it in the form of States or as dependant provinces upon our system of government, our free institutions?

The distinguished Senator from South Carolina showed a great deal of hardihood, or rather that he is a statesman of a by-gone age, when he broached the obsolete idea of executive patronage and the duty of keeping it in just and reasonable limits, even with our present extent of territorial power and dominion. Who can now speak of the subject of patronage without being thought far in the rear of the times? Why, sir, does not the distinguished Senator know that, from the moment when the doctrine of proscription could be openly avowed, and the right of the ruling party to the exclusive enjoyment of the offices and honors of the country was rigorously practised by one great party, and the justice and propriety of the policy, sustained by a large portion of the other, a final extinguisher was applied to all hope of limiting the patronage of this Government upon any old fashioned notion of economy? Yes, sir, I remember the time, since my entrance into public life, when the cry of proscription, of retrenchment, and reform was potent enough with the people of this country to overturn an Administration distinguished alike for its economy, honesty, and ability.

But, sir, we should not despair of resisting successfully the avalanche of power and patronage which now threatens to overwhelm us. Let us inquire for a moment what will be the amount of patronage which will accrue to the Executive when Mexico shall be added to our domain, and laid off into separate territories or provinces.

We shall have not less than twenty-four new and distant territorial or provincial governments, each of which must have a governor—twenty-four governors—and as many secretaries to their excellencies; then the judicial corps in each province of two or three judges, an attorney general, and a marshal; then will follow collectors of customs, at numerous ports on the Pacific and on the Gulf of Mexico; the directors of nine public mints; then, for a period at least, we must have a military chief of a grade not lower than a general commanding the forces in each province; and last, though not least, a governor general for all Mexico. Why, sir, John Bull need not swell himself out, and vaunt himself so lustily any longer. We, too, shall have our Indies; our subject millions; our rich provincial governments; our large standing army; and though we may not boast an empire on which the sun never sets, yet will it soon extend from the Line to the frozen seas of the north. With such prospects of extended dominion, what visions of national grandeur and magnificence may we not indulge? Then such magnificent scenes as we shall behold at this seat of our great republican empire, and all over the country; generals returning from the distant provinces laden with wealth and honors, making their triumphal progress through the country, and suing for the consulship; troops of applicants for office of an inferior grade. What gorgeous spectacles shall we behold on levee occasions at the White House, or rather the imperial palace; what a glitter of epaulettes; what a clatter of dangling swords; what a waving and doffing of red and white plumes! But all this will be eclipsed on presentation day; when the twenty-four new governors shall attend to kiss hands, and take their departure for their distant provinces. Sir, the imagination fires at the thought. I already see the grand usher or master of ceremonies leading in the successful applicants, and hear him saying to the President, "This, sir, is the gentleman whom your Excellency has had the goodness to nominate as governor of the Californias, this of Sonora, this of Sinaloa, this of Guanajuato, this of Jalisco, this of Oaxaca, this of Michoacan, Chiapas, Yucatan, Queretaro, Tamaulipas, New Leon," and so of the rest. "And I have the proud satisfaction to announce to your Excellency that the august Senate confirmed the nominations of all these gentlemen without the slightest inquiry into their fitness, having the most unbounded confidence in the unerring judgment and long tried patriotism of your Excellency in all that pertains to your illustrious station."

Well, sir, this will be a proud occasion. And then, sir, what limits can be set to our growing greatness? We shall have a railway uniting the city of Washington to the city of Montezuma—I insist, sir, that the name of Mexico be changed to that of Montezuma—the two capitals of the United Empire. This shall be our Rome, and if the Lake Tezcuco can be converted into a strait, Montezuma shall be our Constantinople.

Well, sir, do honorable Senators think that we can stand all this more than imperial splendor, without danger to the constitution and the liberties of the country? Why, sir, the prize of the Presidency is already so great that every succeeding election threatens

to convulse our system. Who does not remember the excitement which pervaded the whole country in our more recent Presidential elections—an excitement so intense that society could bear no more? But when we shall have a standing army of fifty thousand men; when our empire shall be enlarged to the contemplated limits; when the whole country shall have been intoxicated by this passion for distinction and glory, personal and national; when the Presidential purple with its present power and patronage, presenting a temptation almost too great for virtue, shall receive this vast accession of strength and influence; when, instead of twenty or thirty, the President can annually dispense a hundred millions among his partisans and followers, who shall say that our institutions will be in no danger? Sir, public liberty will be extinct. But we may console ourselves with the reflection that the forms of the republic will still be preserved. The republic in ruin will still flourish in name; ours will still be denominated the great republic. But what are forms and what is a name? The Roman republic long survived the crushed liberties of the people of Rome. Augustus and his immediate successors carefully observed all the forms of the ancient constitution. Consuls were elected; the Senate continued to debate and register decrees, fancying itself still a constituent element of the government long after every vestige of real power had departed from it forever. But Senators say there is no danger of a similar result to our system, whatever policy we shall adopt in relation to Mexico; and so they go on, in the execution of their present policy, to whatever it may lead.

And this is destiny! It is death! This is to be the triumph of progressive democracy. Sir, I am at a loss to understand what particular quality distinguishes progressive from the good old-fashioned Democracy under which our Government was formed. I know but little of this new school, but the little I do know has not impressed me favorably. I am too old to adopt new theories of government, especially when I am satisfied with my early creed. Progressive democracy, from all I have heard of it, does not appear to be over modest in its pretensions. It has little reverence for the time-honored opinions of the sages and founders of our institutions. Nor is it content with their results, happy and glorious as they are and have been. It aspires to the invention of something still more marvellous for the improvement of the condition of society and of mankind. It claims alliance and joint origin with steam-power, by sea and land; with the locomotive, the steam-ship, and steam press; with the magnetic telegraph, and, in its arrogance, would seem ready to wrest the lightning from Deity, and claim it for its own creation. We have heard its disciples and partisans declaiming perpetually of the extension of the area of freedom. Our present limits are quite too contracted, and nothing less than a continent can give scope for the development of their principles. Old ideas and all existing institutions have fulfilled their missions, and must give place to new ones more conformable to the true destiny of man.

Indeed, sir, in regard to the recent invention called progressive democracy I am as ignorant and as much puzzled and confounded by the declaration of its expounders as the Inca of Peru when Pizarro caused his chaplain to explain to him, through an interpreter, the extent of his authority and the heavenly character of his mission to America. The reverend priest spoke first of the Holy Trinity; then of the Pope of Rome, and last of the Emperor Charles V., and of the powers and attributes of each. But the mystery was too profound for the untutored mind of the Indian. The good Inca, in despair, exclaimed, "Who is me! all that you say of your Three-one-God, of the great man who sits upon the seven hills, and of another great man called the Emperor, I cannot understand; but I see plainly that you claim the right to take from me my country and to destroy my people."

Mr. President, from the views I have presented on this subject, it will be perceived that I have not proceeded on the ground that the Administration entertained any scheme for the conquest of Mexico until after the termination of the campaign of Gen. Scott, by the capture of the city of Mexico, and the failure of Mr. Trist's negotiation. At this period of the war, I have undertaken to show that a policy was conceived and adopted in the further prosecution of the war, and which is still persisted in, which in its inevitable tendency must lead to the final subjugation of that country. I have also endeavored to establish, from the tenor of the message itself and numerous other proofs and circumstances, that the Administration have looked to this as the possible, if not probable, result of its policy; that they have weighed the consequences and resolved to risk them. In the course of my remarks I have given full weight to the argument of the force of circumstances, and the real difficulties and embarrassments in which the Administration is involved in bringing the war to a close, as the inducement to the policy now persisted in. It will also be observed, that in the discussion of this subject I have not considered it material what the real views of the Executive may be upon the question of final con-



quest and annexation. But I have insisted and firmly believe that the further prosecution of this war, according to the plan now in operation and for the objects explicitly avowed, whether the Administration wills it or not, can have no other termination than the one I have assumed as inevitable.

Thus, sir, the real question before us is not whether we shall pass the bill, but how we shall stop this war or control by our resolves the future prosecution of it. It is clear, sir, that we have arrived at a point in our history which will be memorable in all time for good or for evil. It is an epoch! It is not like the crises alluded to by the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs. It is not a question regarding the settlement of disputed points of domestic policy; whether the protection of domestic industry or free trade be the true policy of the country; or whether a national bank or the subtreasury would be the most suitable fiscal agent of the Government; but it is a contest of principle, in which the whole frame and policy of our free system of government, is liable to be unsettled and revolutionized. We are as a nation about to enter upon a perilous enterprise, as vast in its aims as it is daring in its conception. The proposition is, or soon will be, if not arrested by the National Legislature, the incorporation into our Union of a territory large enough to found an empire of itself. Surely, sir, before we try "the hazard of this untrod state," we should pause. I am persuaded that the boldest, and even the most reckless, of those who favor this gigantic project must feel some trepidation, some misgiving. If they are patriots, as I doubt not they are, they will pause before they launch into an unknown stream that will carry them and the country they know not where. It is a question which invokes to its discussion and decision all the genius, and talents, and wisdom of the land. And if any of my Whig friends in this chamber or elsewhere suppose that, after all, there is no great danger of the success of this scheme of conquest and annexation, extravagant as it may appear to them, let me warn them that they are lulling themselves into a false security.

Permit me to advert for a single moment to some of the elements of popular influence which exist in favor of this policy, and the advantage of the position which its advocates enjoy over their opponents. Why, sir, the very magnitude of the proposition, though startling at first from a distrust of its consequences, soon becomes a source of favor and support. The passion for the grand, the vast, and the marvellous, inherent in the mind, especially of the youthful and ardent, soon produces its natural effect, and overcomes all obstacles. Why, sir, I confess that when I give the reins to the imagination I am intoxicated with the grandeur of the prospects that may be opened to us as a nation. Sir, it is a dangerous subject to contemplate. With all the fearful consequences that may arise from the adoption of this great project, some of which I have endeavored to depict, it still has great attractions. Pope illustrated the operation of the human mind upon such a question in his description of the allurements to vice:

"Vice is a monster of such frightful mien  
That to be hated needs but to be seen;  
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

Yes, sir, pity is not an inappropriate idea, for we shall soon hear of the pitiable condition of the poor Mexicans; a prey to all the evils of faction and anarchy. The project, though formidable and repulsive to the judgment at first, when it comes to be softened down, and its dangers diminished by the brilliant coloring of fancy, no longer seems so fearful and perilous. Add to this the vast extent of the country itself, the broad table of the Cordilleras of the Andes, opening out like a fan from the south to the west and the north, affording every variety of clime, from the torrid to the temperate; and then the grandeur and magnificence of some of its features and the beauty of others. There nature exhibits herself in her most sublime and terrific, as well as in her more lovely and enchanting aspects. You see snow-capped mountain-peaks towering to the clouds, and the scarcely extinct volcano, rising by the side of flowery vales, studded with refreshing lakes. There, too, nature has bestowed the often fatal gifts of mountains teeming with precious metals; and the earthquake not infrequent comes to awaken the guilty conscience of the oppressors. It is a country full of stirring recollections. The pen of Prescott has made it a classic land. It was the theatre of the deepest and darkest tragedy ever enacted. It is the land where once flourished a great and populous empire, founded by a race of unknown origin and of mysterious destiny. Sir, striking as these things are in themselves, distance gives to them additional charms and increased enchantment. These are some of the attractions which captivate the imagination of the young and pervert the judgment of mature age, and we shall see that in due time they will be heralded forth throughout this wide country by a thousand tongues in strains of



vivid and impassioned eloquence. Sir, the gratification of national ambition, the national pride, the love of power and dominion which fill the heart of man, the idea that we belong to a great and powerful nation, how often, in the history of the world, have they reconciled the sincerest patriot to despotic rule encircled with glory.

Sir, I confess my own weakness; and when I contemplate this picture of national greatness, I often find myself wishing that this future could be realized without danger to the public liberty. How I would exult if we could only preserve the free institutions of the country, its future prosperity and repose. If such are my own feelings, what must be the effect of the brilliant destinies of the republic presented to the youth of the country, full of ardent and ambitious hopes, and whose impulsive and inexperienced minds seldom pause to weigh the evils which may attend a career of such glittering prospects. Sir, who shall undertake to prophecy a favorable issue to this question, when every temptation to ambition, individual and national, when every lure calculated to excite and win over to this scheme of conquest, alike the laudibly curious and enterprising among the youth of the country, and the vicious and corrupt slaves of cupidity, are offered in rich profusion.

We must not forget the army. It is already an element of great influence in the country. Honest and patriotic as our gallant officers and citizen-soldiers may be, it is but natural that they will form attachments to the country which has been the scene of their glory, and desire its consolidation with their native land. We have already seen evidences of this feeling in the letters and speeches of gallant officers now in the country. They, too, are but men like ourselves, with all our passions and separate interests. While Mexico continues to be the seat of war, they may expect to win new laurels in the service of their country. The ambitious among them who have not yet reached marked distinction will desire new occasions for the display of heroic valor. And when all Mexico shall be subdued to our dominion, and no new fields of martial distinction shall be presented, they may still expect to find employment congenial to their habits.

There is another greater and more formidable influence to be looked to in the settlement of this question. There is a great and powerful party in this country—a party which, for the last twenty years, with the exception of a slight interval, has held the reins of power and enjoyed the honors and emoluments of the civil service. The results of the late elections have shaken their security, and they may be expected to put forth all their energies to maintain their ascendancy. If the President persists in his present policy a few months longer, the issue must come to be, “the conquest of all Mexico.” I do not suppose that every member of the party will yield their settled convictions on this subject for party considerations; far otherwise. We have already heard the voice of opposition to this policy from the other side of this chamber. The distinguished Senator from South Carolina has led the way, and I trust many others will follow. But party is a tyrant. De Tocqueville was right when he said that in few countries of the world was political opinion less free than in this free country of ours. Who that has been in public life has not felt the party lash? What so galling to the feelings of an ingenuous mind and a patriot as to find himself compelled to relinquish his station, or to yield to the behest or dictation, often of inferior minds, who, by superior chances, come to be considered party leaders? and the brightest genius sometimes makes a fatal blunder.

Sir, in calculating the advantages which the supporters of the policy of conquest possess, and the chances of averting such an issue in the coming political conflict, there is one of a peculiar character which deserves to be considered. It arises from the dilemma in which the President is placed, in part by himself and his friends, and in part by the Whig opposition. The President, very early in the progress of the war, declared his purpose of retaining New Mexico and California. But his friends of the North and East said to him, You shall not take those territories but upon condition of the Wilmot proviso. The Whigs of the South became alarmed, and united with the North in the no-territory policy. Thus was the President checkmated both by his friends and opponents. This was his dilemma; how to escape from it was the question. He had no way to escape but by frankly retracing his steps, acknowledging his error, and making a treaty without the cession of territory; but that few men in high station, and who aspire to the rank of statesmen, can afford to do. It requires a great man, a very great man, to do this. I do not mean to speak offensively of the President. I consider the embarrassment under which he was thus placed in reference to the conclusion of the war, great and serious. If he treated with Mexico without the territories, nothing but the military glory achieved in the war would remain, after all the sacrifices of the country in the prosecution of it. From this embarrassment nothing could relieve him but the intervention of Congress by declaring the objects of the war. Hence, was he tempted continually to a new line of policy; and the refusal of the Government of Mexico to

treat with Mr. Trist, with the brilliant conquests of Gen. Scott, gave the encouragement to the new and extended objects of the war which now constitute his avowed policy. And the causes which produced this determination must still embarrass the President in any attempt to close this war unless Congress will relieve him. He is still impelled by a dire moral necessity, either to degrade himself from the rank of statesmen, by the voluntary confession of error, or to take the hazard of elevating himself to a still higher fame, or of losing all, by involving his country in a fatal enterprise.

But, sir, the friends and supporters of the President and his administration are embarrassed by the same causes; they are in a like dilemma with himself, and one in which they involved both him and themselves. Hence the temptation to them to adopt a new and bolder policy; to extend their views far beyond New Mexico and California. A whole party, powerful in resources of skill, talent, and patronage, are thus placed in circumstances strongly urging them to an issue which at one bound clears every barrier—relieves them from all past embarrassments, Wilmot proviso and all—and if they should fail, they will fall in the execution of a bold conception; but if, on the other hand, they should be successful, and carry out the daring project of uniting all Mexico to our Union, the leaders of the enterprise will leave a name in history of no half way measure of renown or dishonor. The fame of the authors of the movement must rise with the increasing glory of a still free country; or their names will be execrated amid the broken and crumbling ruins of the republic.

Such, sir, are the dangers and temptations to which the country now stands exposed; and if the party in power shall determine to make the issue I have supposed, who can estimate its force in the decision which the country must declare.

And what, sir, are the resources of power and influence which the opponents of this scheme have at their command? Where the high official stations? what patronage to uphold the public press—to stimulate the zeal of partizans? None, sir, none. They must rely alone upon the moral influence and considerations inherent in the question itself. Does any one inquire where is the Whig opposition—the great Whig party? Why, sir, as a party, the Whigs, in standing out against this policy, are shorn of half their strength by the very idea that their opposition springs from party motives; and further, by their position in seeming to withhold supplies for the prosecution of a war in which the country is engaged with a foreign foe; by the cry of treason and alliance with the public enemy. Instead of an advantage, the idea of a party opposition, from the necessity of the case, is a formidable drawback to the influence of those who look with alarm to the results of the further prosecution of the war.

But, sir, while we thus stand confronted with this question, involving the future liberties of the country, the greatest but one that can ever be debated in this chamber, (the question of union and national existence,) what do we behold? Where are the members of that glorious Whig fraternity? Where their great leaders, including the most distinguished and experienced statesmen of the country, and to whom the country mainly looks, and has a right to look, to save it from the impending calamity? Where those to whom the country looks for wise counsel, prompt and energetic action, at such a crisis? And what are they doing? Hesitating and faltering in their arrangements for the coming conflict; disputing about old usages; insisting on personal preferences; distracted by narrow sectional jealousies. When the ground on which they stand is volcanic, and they already feel the throbbing of the smothered elements, instead of flying quickly to the only safe refuge that offers, they stop to gather up a budget of old hobbies, precious old wares, some new, personal, and mixed, altogether load enough to sink a navy; they pause to consider whether some other mode of escape may not present itself; to see if the threatened shock may not pass off without injury. When the real question is, whether all Mexico shall be annexed, they moot the point whether it would be proper to take a slip of it, more or less; and, when the North and the South are threatened by one equal fatality, it is debated whether the slave power should not be hedged in by a proviso! Yes, sir, I regret to say that the *vomito prieto* is not confined to the *tierra caliente* of Mexico. A *politico vomito prieto* prevails to an alarming extent at the North and East, which I much fear will prove more destructive to our dearest interests than it has done to our brave soldiers in Mexico. And thus, sir, at a period perhaps the most momentous that has occurred in our history, and when all jealousies, sectional and personal, and the jostling of individual ambition should be resolutely disregarded, those of every section, who are anxious to stand by the republic, and rescue her institutions from the dangers that gather round them, are shorn of their strength, distracted, and paralyzed by their own divisions.

Sir, does any of my Whig friends consider that I exaggerate the probability that the issue will be such as I have assumed. From the evidences before them do they consider



it questionable? Why, sir, if there was nothing else to warn them of the nature of the coming struggle, the speech of the honorable chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, it seems to me, ought to suffice. Have you not seen that able Senator, up to a recent period of his life distinguished for the philosophic vein which runs through all his writings and speeches, fling aside his philosophy and proclaim the superiority of instinct over the conclusions of reason, in estimating military glory as an element of national strength; giving himself up to the encouragement and support of all the extravaganzas of progressive democracy in declaring that he can see no great cause of alarm in the idea of extending our dominion over the whole continent. I mean no offence to that distinguished Senator; I have a high regard both for his talents and his private virtues; but I must say that I am utterly amazed by his remarks upon this subject; I must say of his new course that though it may be fortunate for him, it must be deeply afflictive to his country. But, upon the introduction of the resolutions offered upon this subject by the distinguished Senator from South Carolina, (Mr. CALHOUN,)—and may this Senate ever boast one or more such Senators, who may possess the moral courage to rise above party on a question like this, and give himself to his country alone—what more did we hear from the honorable Senator from Michigan? Sir, it was that the questions presented in the resolutions were mere abstract propositions, which, if adopted, could have no practical operation or influence in preventing the catastrophe against which the resolution was pointed. “Why, sir,” exclaimed the Senator, “if the people will the annexation of Mexico, nothing in our power to do can prevent it; you may as well plant yourself upon the brink of the cataract of Niagara and bid the waters be still.”

Well, sir, does the honorable Senator really believe that nothing the Senate can do, no resolution that can be adopted here, no declaration of opinion upon this great question, will have any effect with the country or among the people? And has the Senate sunk so low? And is it so that the Senate, which is presumed to be composed of gentlemen of large experience in public affairs, statesmen distinguished for their ability and patriotism in the States they represent, on a question involving the greatest consequences, and such as may decide forever the experiment of free republican institutions, can have no influence with the yeomen of the country—with the farmer at his plough, the merchant at his counter or his desk, the mechanic in his workshop—a class which always look only to the good of the country, which is never disturbed nor biased by dreams of personal ambition, and who value their constitution and the Union as the guaranties as they are of their domestic happiness, the security of their lives and property, and the preservation of their privileges, civil and religious. Sir, I can subscribe to no such conclusion. Sir, does the honorable Senator really suppose that the declaration of his individual opinions and sentiments on this great question, or any other on this floor, can have no weight with the people of this country? If he does, I can assure the honorable Senator that he greatly undervalues the estimation in which he is held in this country, both for his talents and his patriotism. Sir, whenever that day shall come that the opinions of the American Senate can have no influence in correcting the impulses of popular feeling, the hastily formed and ill-considered opinions of the people upon a question involving their liberties, I shall not calculate how long those liberties may endure, or how soon they may perish.

Mr. President, I have reflected much upon the question, in all its grave aspects, and I feel compelled to express the conviction that, as a people enjoying the fruits of a free system of Government, we stand on the very brink of our fate. If we do not stop this war now, or before another new year—one step further in our present course and we shall be borne by an irresistible current, beyond retreat or rescue, into irretrievable misfortune and ruin. If we are saved it will be by the providence of God, not of man.

There is something, Mr. President, in our present relations with Mexico—something so unusual, not to say wonderful, in all the incidents of this war—that, were I superstitious, I should say that a higher power than ours holds the issues of it, and for purposes we may not comprehend. The instances of individual self-sacrifice, of reckless yet successful adventure, of such frequent occurrence in this war, carry us back in search of parallel examples to the heroic ages of antiquity, and seem fitter subjects for fabulous and romantic narrative, than the sober pages of truthful history. There is no record in the history of modern warfare, nor ancient either, of a more brilliant and uninterrupted series of well fought battles and victorious results against such odds as that which now forms part of the imperishable annals of the republic; and when we contemplate the intrepidity and skill of our officers; the impetuous valor which has distinguished every corps of our army, whether of regular soldiers or of volunteers—a valor which neither natural obstructions, nor military defences, nor a force often five times more numerous, could arrest in their rapid and victorious career—we are involuntarily reminded of the similar and thrilling exploits of Cortez in the same fields of military fame—in the land which, by this double act of conquest, seems devoted.



It is now about three hundred years since that extraordinary man, with a band of adventurers less than seven hundred in number, urged on by two of the strongest passions of our nature, cupidity and religious fanaticism, landed upon an unknown shore, burnt his ships, attacked—and, after enacting scenes so mixed of craft, cruelty, and blood, yet so gilded over with feats of high chivalry and dauntless courage that the muse of history pauses in her task, and hesitates to praise or blame—overthrew a populous and powerful empire. These victorious adventurers were the ancestors and countrymen of that race which ever since has held sway over the conquered country, whatever form the Government has assumed, whether Vice Regal or free. It was an Indian race that peopled the empire which Cortes overturned; and they were the ancestors and countrymen of the same race which now inhabit the land of their fathers. They were made serfs, the hewers of wood and the drawers of water, to their new masters three centuries ago; with some amelioration they continue to be so to this day; though free in name, they still wear the badges of a subject people—still remain the victims of conquest and of their primeval caste and complexion. Whatever faction rules for the hour, they are still the sufferers. What religion fails to exact from them, their proud and insolent conquerors extort, under the pretext of Government support, or to maintain an army which oppresses them in peace and gives them no protection in war. Wonderful retribution! That at the distance of centuries the descendants of the original spoilers should be made to suffer the penalty of the wrongs committed by their forefathers; that they in turn should be trodden under the iron heel of war—be made to pass under the yoke of the conqueror.

Mr. President, if I may be permitted to moralize upon the extraordinary and mysterious vicissitudes and coincidences in the fortunes of nations, I would ask what are our motives, what our purposes in the further prosecution of this war? Are we sure, sir, that the motives of those who direct this war, who put all this chivalry in motion in a foreign land, are not tainted with the lust of conquest? Are we sure that, whatever cause of war may have existed at its origin, other motives and other objects have not supervened less defensible in their character than the rights and honor of the country, the only legitimate causes of war? Are the invaders of this ill-fated country, of the nineteenth century, so pure and upright in all their objects, and so far elevated above the passions of those of the sixteenth, that they may hope to escape the retribution which awaited them, and which has ever awaited the conqueror and oppressor?

It is said of Scipio—not he that overcame Hannibal, but Scipio, the destroyer of Carthage—that when surveying the scene of carnage and desolation around him, and when he saw the wife of Hasdrubal, arrayed in her richest apparel, slowly ascending to the summit of the temple which rose above the conflagration, and thence, after stabbing her children, precipitate herself into the burning elements below, he wept, but it was not over Carthage—Rome rose up to his view with all her crimes and oppressions, and he saw inscribed on the rolls of her future history the sentence of eternal justice that she, too, must fall.

Sir, if any should now desire to know my poor opinion of the proper mode of terminating this war, I say to them, make the best treaty with any existing Government you can. If you must have the territories of New Mexico and California, get a cession of them; if you cannot do that, come back to the Rio Grande—to the boundary you claim title to, and thus save your honor.

My advice is, Stop the war! Flee the country as you would a city doomed to destruction by fire from Heaven!









